



PARISH OF ST. PETER, HALLIWELL, BOLTON

PARISH PROFILE

www.stpetersparish.info



*Transforming Bolton
together in Jesus' Name*

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Our Parish

Vision & Mission

Our vision at St Peter’s is to transform Bolton together in Jesus’ name. This shapes our **values** and **priorities** as a Parish and individual churches, as laid out in our **Mission Action Plan** (MAP) which can be found on our website. This was last completed in November 2018 and is regularly updated to reflect how action points are being changed or revised. Our vision can be summarised in the graphic below.

Our Vision	
Transforming Bolton together in Jesus’ name	
Our Foundations	
<p>Welcoming in: all are invited and everyone belongs in Christ</p> <p>Moving on: ready to take God-led risks and start, stop and change as He leads</p> <p>Going out: committed to establishing God’s kingdom in Bolton and beyond</p>	
Our Mission Goals – to be a parish which seeks to:	
Know God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be devoted to sacrificial prayer and rooted in God’s word. • Give people the space and freedom to encounter the Holy Spirit. • Help more people come to know Jesus for the first time.
Grow in God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be whole life disciples, helping everyone to follow and serve God wherever they are. • Share all of life together and recognise that everyone has something important to give. • Empower young people, encouraging them to lead the way; embrace older people, encouraging them to share their wisdom and passion.
Go for God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be on the lookout for God at work, ready to grasp opportunities to share the good news that Jesus is alive. Reinterpret biblical truths for today’s world. • Engage with our neighbourhoods, and play our part as God transforms them, our town and our world. • Partner with others in seeking the common good, ready to take a lead where needed, and willing to share all that God has given us for His glory.

We are excited about working with our new incumbent to develop our vision and plans for the next ten years and beyond. In spring 2021 we developed a strategic action plan to guide us, which is summarised below:

Our overriding priority is to grow our church by:

1. Identifying and focusing on our “key ministries” as we recover from the pandemic

2. Making the most of our buildings to better accommodate the key ministries and our outreach activities
3. Developing “Life Groups” as a means of developing stronger relationships between small groups of people and providing discipleship teaching/training in order to provide confidence to enable members to more readily witness for Christ on their frontlines.
4. Creating a strong social media presence to encourage and inspire people.

Theology & Churchmanship

We are an evangelical Anglican church, and we fully subscribe to the [Evangelical Alliance basis of faith](#).

We want to express God’s love for the world in the way that we live and relate to others and we find the Bible a trustworthy guide in discovering God and His will for our lives and our community. Faith for us means a transforming and trusting relationship with God through Jesus Christ in the power of the Spirit. As a church, we have worked with and been greatly influenced by the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC) who have helped us to emphasise whole life discipleship to the extent that concepts such as “frontlines” and “scattered and gathered church” have entered our vocabulary. Our current strapline *“Transforming Bolton together in Jesus’ name”* reflects our vision.

Our style of worship tends to the informal and we are strong believers in “every member ministry”. Our clergy generally only robe for life events such as weddings and funerals. The vast majority of our services include contemporary sung worship lead by a worship band, and will often include video clips or drama which support the service theme. We have congregations meeting in four different worship centres with up to six services each Sunday, some of which being simultaneous, making the use of lay people as leaders essential. One of these six services has a more traditional, liturgical format with hymns accompanied by the organ and liturgy from Common Worship.

Members of our congregations regularly attend various conferences including Spring Harvest, New Wine and Keswick Convention and our young people (aged 12-18) attend “Dreaming the Impossible” (DTI). DTI is about inspiring and equipping young people to love God, love others and change the world. The organisers aim is that young people would encounter God at DTI and leave their gatherings knowing his love for them in a deeper way, and be ready to live out their faith back home being part of a local church.

Many of our congregation are also involved with various social action initiatives and we maintain close links with organisations such as Urban Outreach (<https://www.urbanoutreach.co.uk>) and Create Bolton (<https://createbolton.org.uk>).

We benefit from a high standard of teaching and preaching from clergy, licensed lay ministers and members of the congregation alike (we have a preaching rota of about 30 people). The overall style is challenging, thoughtful and seeks to apply Biblical principles to everyday life; we are committed to encouraging church members towards whole life discipleship. Our leadership is not defined by gender; St Peter's has had female curates in the past and has proposed women for ordination.



Please do browse our YouTube channel where you can watch many of our previous services:

<https://www.youtube.com/stpetershalliwell> .

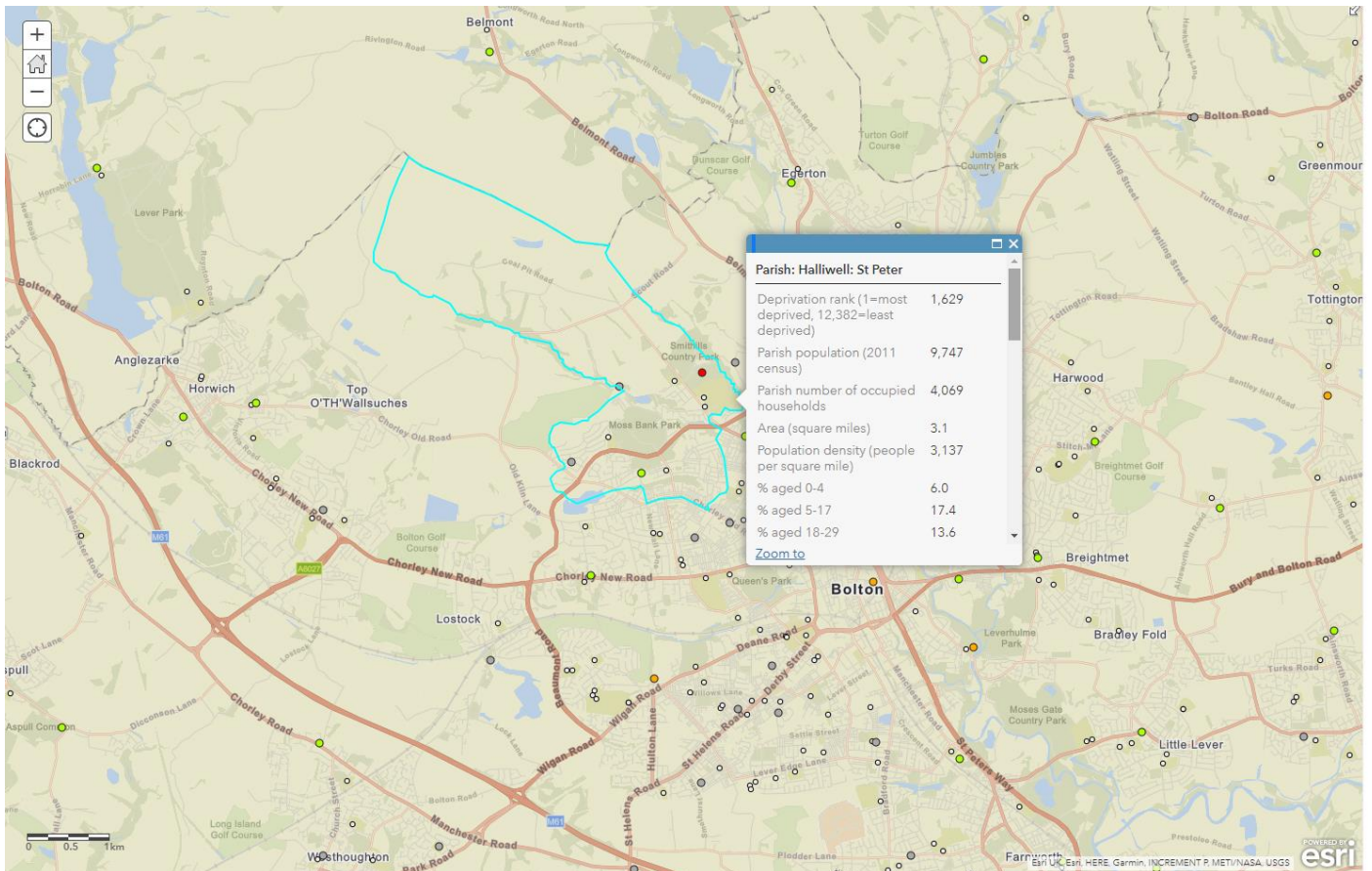
Location & Membership

Bolton is 10 miles north-west of Manchester. It is surrounded by several neighbouring towns and villages that together form the Metropolitan Borough of Bolton, of which Bolton is the administrative centre. The town of Bolton has a population of 139,403, whilst the wider metropolitan borough has a population of 262,400. According to a survey of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, Boltonians are the friendliest people in Britain. Bolton is reasonably close to several National parks and Areas of Natural Beauty, including the Lake District, Yorkshire Dales, Peak District and the Trough of Bowland, and adjacent to the West Pennine Moors.

Cultural highlights in Bolton include several theatres such as the Octagon, Bolton Little Theatre and the Phoenix Theatre Company. Bolton has also been used as a filming location for several recent films and television programmes, including "It's a Sin", "Peaky Blinders", "Traces" and "Last Tango in Halifax". Inside the Town Hall there is a theatre and conference complex, the Albert Halls. Le Mans Crescent, home to the central library, museum, art gallery, aquarium, magistrates' court and town hall, is to be the centre of a new Cultural Quarter. Bolton Museum and Art Gallery houses a collection of local and international art, and Bolton Steam Museum houses a variety of heritage steam engines in the old Atlas Mill. The town centre is currently undergoing substantial redevelopment.

Parish Profile – St. Peter’s, Halliwell

Our local football club is Bolton Wanderers which was formed in 1874 and was a founder member of the Football League – a club steeped in history, heritage and a deep love and understanding of the beautiful game. Bolton is also the home of England's only full-distance IRONMAN. This race is known for its iconic spectator support, incredible North West English bike course scenery, and impressive finish line in the heart of the town centre.



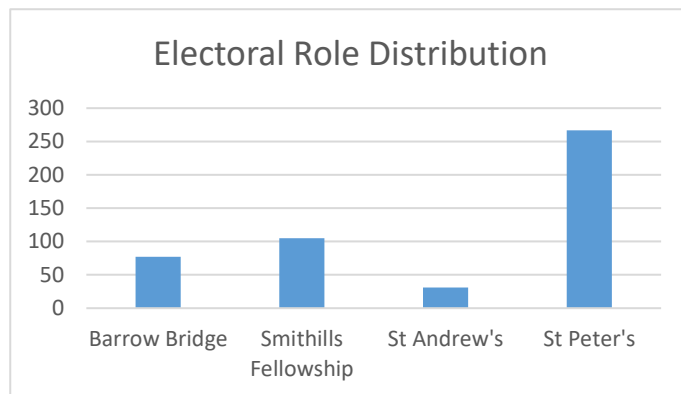
The parish has an official population of 9,747 (2011 Census) and includes several affluent areas as well as some areas of deprivation. It lacks a central focal point but includes a major park and some lovely open countryside. The parish contains 4100 households; of these, 93% identify as white. In terms of faith background, 71% identify as Christian, 20% as no religion and 2.5% as Muslim (2011 census data).

There are three primary schools, one of which is our church school, and one secondary school within the parish.

Our parish consists of 4 churches: St Peter’s Church and three sister churches of St Andrew’s, Barrow Bridge, and Smithills, which serve specific congregations and communities. We also have the Parish Centre which is a parish-wide resource, providing space for our ministries and local community groups. The Parish Centre is also licenced as a worship centre and sometimes used by our congregations where needed.

Our electoral role numbers about 480 people, of whom just over half live in the parish; the breakdown across the churches is shown below. We are a very sociable, welcoming church, seeking to develop a closer sense of community across the parish and beyond.

We have a very committed core that have been members for many years and, at the other extreme, a large attendance of young families committed to their children’s schooling. The latter tend to fall away as their children grow older. Those in the 30-40 age range are underrepresented. Statistics over the 10 years between 2009 and 2019 show that actual church attendance has decreased by almost 30%.



However, the proportion of children (under 16) attending has remained relatively constant at about 30%. Between 2013 and 2019 (years when the roll was fully revised) the decrease was about 20%.

Leadership & Governance across the Parish

We consider it a real strength of the parish that there is well-established lay leadership across many areas. There is a lot of practical support and structures in place, and many areas run with a high degree of autonomy.

The PCC directly employ five people who have key roles in the church. The staff team meet for prayer once a week, in addition to a weekly staff meeting and regular study days and socials together. Currently, the vicar has line management responsibilities for several of the employed staff. The employed staff include the Parish Business Manager (Amanda), the CAP Centre Manager (Sam), the Caretaker (Ben), the Parish Finance Administrator (Elaine) and a cleaner (Shirley – based at St Andrew’s).

The parish has a single PCC with 23 members, which meets approximately 6 times a year. Sub-committees oversee specific elements of parish management. There are two church wardens for the parish.

Each of the four churches has its own leadership team (technically sub-committees of the PCC), which is lay-chaired and includes a number of members of the church as well as the vicar. These teams work with the vicar to oversee the worship, ministries and mission activities of each church, and are the owners of each church MAP. Members of the St Peter’s Leadership Team are appointed. However, for the three sister

churches (St Andrew’s, Smithills Fellowship and Barrow Bridge), the leadership teams are elected and have a slightly broader remit including some control over buildings and finance. These three churches run with quite a high degree of autonomy.

The chairs of each leadership team meet together regularly with the vicar and, in addition, each leadership team has representation on the PCC. We all work under the same shared vision and parish-wide MAP; although we are churches with different contexts and identities, we work closely together.

Key People



Rev'd Alan Saunders, Vicar:

Alan was appointed vicar in September 2022 after the retirement of our previous vicar. He’s married to Ruth and they have two grown-up children. Although a fairly recent arrival as Vicar, Alan has previously served as a curate in the parish and so already knew a great deal about us. He’s a keen musician and plays trumpet in a number of local orchestras and bands.

Amanda Blease, Parish Business Manager (employed for 27.5 hours per week): A member of St. Peter’s Church, Amanda joined our staff team in September 2009. Amanda’s responsibility is day to day administration for both the work of the parish as a whole, St Peter’s Church and the Parish Centre.





Elian Winstanley, Churchwarden: Elian has been a member of St. Peter’s since 1987 and was elected a Warden in 2018. He’s also our resident “techie” and is heavily involved in developing our AV support and live-streaming.

Phil Weaver, Churchwarden: Phil has been a member of St. Peter’s since 2004 and was elected Warden in 2021. Previously to this, he served as our Treasurer and Gift Aid Secretary. Phil also volunteers at Urban Outreach and serves on our Welcome Team.



Sam Wolstencroft, CAP Centre Manager (employed for 22.5 hours per week): Our CAP Centre has been running for over 10 years. Sam is a member of St Peter’s Church, who has worked as our CAP (Christians Against Poverty) manager since September 2016, having previously been our Debt Coach. She works with clients, as well as coordinating our team of support workers.

Relationships with the Diocese and other churches

Over the last ten years, several members from our Parish have been called by God to offer themselves for ordination in the Church of England. For example, in 2023, we have had one former member being ordained as priest and another ordained as deacon and starting a curacy. The parish also has also trained two Lay Readers and six Authorised Lay Ministers.

The logo for Bolton 2030 features the word "Bolton" in a multi-colored font (red, orange, yellow, green, blue) and "2030" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The text is positioned between two horizontal yellow bars.

Bolton 2030

St Peter's is also heavily involved with Passion 2030, a group of churches across Bolton uniting to play their part in the Bolton 2030 Vision Partnership who aim to "share the love of God across Bolton by encouraging churches to work together to support each other and support the Bolton community." Events organised by this group include various workshops and a Bolton-wide online Carol Service.

Our Churches

St. Peter’s

Introduction

St Peter’s church was built in the 1840s and sits in the heart of the parish. It is the mother church of the parish, with an average Sunday attendance (across three services) of around 160 adults and 70 children (October 2022 census). It is a large, friendly church of all ages, with services characterised by modern worship and strong Bible teaching.



Sunday Services

There are three services on a Sunday:

- 08:30 - a more traditional Common Worship service with average attendance of about 25, usually with hymns accompanied by the organ. This congregation is mainly older, and value thoughtful worship and preaching.
- 10:30 - a family-focused service with modern worship, accessible preaching and an average attendance of around 150 (103 adults and 47 children). This alternates between an all-age service and an adult-focused, but accessible, service with concurrent creche, Twinklers (2-4 years) and LIGHThouse (5-13 years) provision for children. There is a mix of all ages and stages, including many families attending due to church school entrance requirements. This service is live-streamed on both YouTube and Facebook.
- 6:30 - an informal cross-parish service with a focus on in-depth preaching and extended sung worship, with average attendance of about 90. This is attended by many of our ‘core’ church members, and offers an opportunity for people across all of the churches in the parish to come together for worship and fellowship. It particularly attracts our young adults, but is attended by a very wide range of ages. The reading and talk for this service is live-streamed on YouTube.

Each of these services includes Holy Communion one a month.

We are a vibrant and flourishing church; however like everyone there are areas in which we face challenges and where we are seeking to grow. We have a vision to see the church as a community hub, and being able to use the building better as a tool of mission.

Mission and Community Engagement

As the largest church in the parish, there is often a blurring between St Peter's Church activities, and St Peter's Parish activities - especially where they take place in the Parish Centre, and are supported by attendees or volunteers from across the different churches. To avoid duplication, St Peter's church mission and community outreach activities are listed under the main outreach, mission, fellowship & discipleship sections further on in this profile.

Smithills Fellowship

Smithills Fellowship is a congregation within the parish that meets in St Peter's Primary school. It is a multi-generational congregation with young families, alongside long-standing members over 80 years old.

As a fellowship we are passionate about Jesus and passionate about people, seeking to bring people to faith and grow disciples through our services and activities. Our prayer is that we will always glorify God in the life of the Church, and our presence in the community.

Sunday Services

Sunday services are informal with sung worship led by our worship band. Our weekly attendance averages around 75 adults and 45 children (October 2022 census). We have small teams of faithful church members who serve in different ways to make our services possible, from setting up, running technology, serving coffee and contributing to the service itself. Our children have access to a children's ministry "timeout" twice a month, which makes use of classroom space in school. Once a month we have a café-style service.

Building fellowship and prayer

Over the last few years we have met as a fellowship once a half term over a meal in school on a Monday tea time. This has been a time to chat and build relationships and to share a testimony and time of prayer at the end of our meal. We also meet once a month to pray for our church, its members and our community. We have one mid-week home group, and one Saturday morning "men's walk, talk and pray".



Mission & Community Engagement

Overseas Mission

In addition to the parish-wide National and International Ministries work, for over 3 decades Smithills fellowship has fostered strong links with the diocese of Machakos, and Makeni, Kenya. We have supported various projects in the area, including financing theological training and recently raising over £12,000 as our extended harvest project to enable a local borehole to be drilled. We have also exchanged visits with Bishop Joseph & Bishop Francis visiting Bolton and a few of our members visiting Kenya.

Smithills Christmas Market



In 2014 we were encouraged to reach out and engage with our community as part of the Year of Hope. As a result we began “Smithills Christmas Market” on Redcar Road. Its original ethos and intention was to engage with neighbours and build community. Every year, non-church members have participated alongside us and enthusiastically helped to raise money for our town centre charity Urban Outreach. Over the last 9 years the Market has provided much-needed funds for the fresh produce for the “Christmas Dinner on Jesus” hampers distributed around Bolton. It even went online during the COVID pandemic!



Café on the Green

This pop-up café began in 2019 on four pre-set Saturdays throughout the year. It is an opportunity to welcome our community into our building and serve them fresh food and cakes. It is also a place where our young people can serve, and it has been well received with the local community returning for repeat visits.

Christmas Nativity at the Farm



For a number of years, at Christmas we have been able to tell the story of Jesus birth on a real-life local farm. Typically, over 150 adults and children followed the performers around the farm, joining in with carols and listening to a message of the good news of Jesus’s birth.

The Future

Our Sunday services and other outreach events will offer opportunities to encourage new people to serve and for existing members to serve in new or different ways. Our priorities will be to continue to develop our pastoral care, encouraging “Life Groups” to be a focus for pastoral care and discipleship. Exciting times lie ahead!

Barrow Bridge Mission

Introduction

Barrow Bridge Mission is one of the sister churches in the parish of St Peters, situated approximately ½ a mile away from the main parish church in a picturesque area of Bolton.

The locals like to call this area Barrow Bridge village although there is neither a shop or a pub in the neighbourhood. The area in and around the mission is one of natural beauty, with a river running through the middle of the village. The local houses are mainly stone and a number are accessed over their own bridges.

As for the population demographic, it is predominantly middle class, and as a result property prices in this area are usually slightly above the average for Bolton as a whole.

The Mission building itself used to be a part of a 6-story cotton mill (formally the engineers' workshop) and is built in stone and stands on the riverside in the middle of the village. In 1999 the building was refurbished and extended and now offers an attractive, modern, welcoming space.

As you enter the Mission you have to cross the river on a metal bridge and once inside there are two main rooms; one used for the Sunday worship and one for meetings and socialising, with a modern kitchen and toilets in the middle, separating the two rooms.

Sunday Services.

Sunday services range from traditional to family services led by the children and the sung worship ranges from traditional to contemporary in nature. We meet weekly every Sunday at 10.30am for worship.

On most Sundays, the children attend Sunday school, which meets in the meeting room and a bible class that meets in the homes of members of the congregation.

Average attendance on a Sunday morning would be around

50 adults, ranging from late 30's to 90 in age and around 10-15 children under 16 years old and predominantly white, middle class.



Building Fellowship and Prayer

As the building and church congregation are quite small, there is a real sense of family and community within the church; a very friendly and welcoming place to worship. Midweek there is one Connect group with approx. 8/10 attendees.

Mission and Community Engagement

This has been one area that the church has focused on in the recent past.

Annually, the church arranges a bonfire and firework display for the local community and will regularly sell out the 450 tickets allocated.



Also, one of the unique aspects of the church is the proximity to the river.

Refreshments in the church and a

duck race are held in the river in front of the mission in May, where plastic ducks are raced to raise money for local charities. This event will attract 200 + attendees. Bi-annually



the Mission hosts a Christmas tree festival where the building is filled with Christmas trees decorated from the local schools and community groups.

The Woodland Trust uses the facilities of the building regularly for training and meetings, as well as a local singing teacher and our fellowship banner group. The quiet peaceful area is also ideal for church retreat days and a number of churches from all denominations regularly book to use the building this way.

The Future

Barrow Bridge Mission is a friendly and welcoming church with wide variety and good congregational involvement on Sundays, with many people staying on after the service for refreshments. Other strengths are the level of pastoral care available. The fellowship is also disability friendly. One challenge is to increase

parish wide involvement with both the youth and adult members. It is felt that there are opportunities to further develop the format of services and to grow the youth ministry by greater use of parish resources.

St Andrew's Church

“The purpose of this church is to encourage one another to know and experience the reality of Jesus and to share it with this community.”

St. Andrews Church, also known as the Hope Centre, began life as a Mission Hall, built in 1934 to minister to the social housing estate that was being built in the area. The Mission became part of the Church of England in 1955 attached to the Parish of St. Peter Halliwell. In 2007 it underwent an extension and modernisation programme more suited to meeting growing ministry needs. It is the smallest of the churches in the parish. St. Andrews is situated on the Johnson Fold estate, a deprived area with several socio-economic challenges.



The church meets weekly on Sunday mornings at 10.30 for worship. The style is relaxed but rather traditional with an average attendance of 30. On the first Sunday of the month a faith lunch follows the service. There is also one connect group which meets fortnightly.

St. Andrews enjoys very strong partnerships with a number of Christians from across the parish who support our ministries by leading/speaking at our services and/or serving in our many weekly social programmes.

There is a willingness and openness for many non-church families to be involved in the many varied activities and programmes that were taking place prior to lockdown. Opportunities for Kingdom growth are extensive; however, breakthroughs with the gospel are quite rare and, even then, prove difficult to maintain.

St. Andrews Church supports three external mission partners prayerfully and financially.

- A Christian couple who founded a charity that serves the whole town. This charity ministers to many who find themselves living on the fringes of society.
- A church building programme in Zimbabwe.
- A Christian couple working in the USA to highlight the importance of prayer and encourage people to pray regularly and innovatively.

Mission and Community Engagement



One of the major ministries is a “Mums and Tots” group called TOTS (which also included Health visitors), a lunch for the over 50’s and varied afternoon activities.

Another is “Hub at the Hope”, a weekly “drop-in” operating on a Wednesday morning for anyone to call in for a coffee and a piece of cake, and if necessary to talk about anything on their minds.

For the last few years, the church has been used during the school summer holidays for the collecting of pre-packed free school children’s lunches.

The TOTS leadership conducted a survey in 2019 and the following comments were typical of those received:

“This is just a gem in the middle of Johnson Fold Community and don’t take them from us too. Please keep doing it”

“Thank you to everyone for making me and my kid feel welcomed.”

The Future

In summary, St. Andrew's is a place of great warmth and welcome with a small but faithful congregation who have a strong desire for the Gospel message to be heard and experienced across their community. The church benefits from a healthy prayer team/chain and a strong core of Christians from across the parish who actively support services and ministries. However, challenges include the proportion of the congregation who live outside the area of the church, the average age of the current congregation and the relatively small number of regular attendees at Sunday services.

Key Parish-wide Ministries

Youth and Children’s Work

Our vision is for young people and children to be engaging in church community, growing a faith that sticks and sharing hope and good news with others. Our key values and priorities are community, connection, mental health, wellbeing and discipleship.

The youth and children’s ministry is a vibrant and integral part of the parish at St. Peter’s. It is supported by a team of over one hundred volunteers. The ministry is active during Sunday services and all throughout the week. It engages with over 2,000 children and young people through its work in the community and in schools.



Children’s Ministry

Some of the key ministries are:

- Discipleship within children’s groups during the Sunday morning services, and regular involvement in the main services through drama, leading, readings and prayers.
- Weekly toddler groups including Little Wiggles and The Well groups at our Parish Centre and the St. Andrew’s TOTS group running from the Hope Centre. Combined, these work with at least 150 families, supporting them and providing a strong missional link with the church. Little Wiggles follows a Bible-based curriculum devised by the Manchester Diocese Children Changing Places project. Sessions include free play, a story with a Biblical link, singing, prayer, nursery rhymes, craft activity, snacks and coffee/tea for parents and carers. There are opportunities for volunteers to engage with

parents and carers and to provide support where needed. Many parents/grandparents have attended the group (or similar predecessor groups) with a succession of their children over the years and it has been shown that attendance at toddler groups has been a key pathway by which families have started to attend our church services and become a part of the St. Peter's family.

- Events throughout the year such as holiday clubs, special children's events and an annual Light Party.

There are opportunities for admission to communion and confirmation available to children and young people.

Schools



Our church school is St. Peter's Smithills Dean CE Primary School, a one-form entry school which is part of the 'Forward as One' Academy Trust. Our vicar is a governor at this school.

There are two other primary schools in our parish, Johnson Folder Community Primary School and Church Road Primary School and, at all these schools we regularly lead collective worship and are involved in events such as Easter Experience and iSingPOP. We

occasionally lead assemblies in Smithills School and work closely with the chaplaincy team at Canon Slade School, a Church of England secondary school just outside our parish boundary which is attended by many of our young people.



Youth Ministry

Young people's participation is an essential part of church services, such as leading and operating the audio and visuals. Our young people who are musically inclined are also involved in leading worship and are being mentored by other worship leaders in the parish.

We have several weekly open access youth sessions including:

“Through the youth work here I have gone to new places and tried new things, and I’ve developed courage and confidence to achieve things that I didn’t think I would be able to.” Caitlin

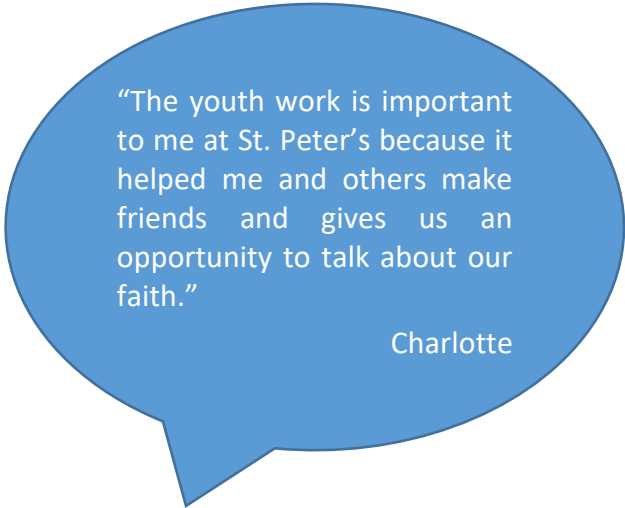
- Tread at the Parish Centre, engaging with around 40 young people, (about 60% already have some church involvement).
- Many young people aged 14 - 18 choose to join a discipleship group, and we run the Duke of Edinburgh Award for this age group. At 18, we offer support into gap years and the Fusion Student Link Up course, if they are planning to attend university.

We are Kintsugi Hope Partners and in 2021 started running wellbeing groups for young people. We hope to expand this into schools.

Residentials, summer camps, fundraising, mission and serving the community are all important parts of our annual programme. For example, in 2023, thirteen of young people in the 12-18 age range are attending the “Dreaming the Impossible” youth event, accompanied by a number of our youth leaders.

The strengths of the youth and children’s ministry include a committed and experienced core team of leaders, young people involved in serving and leadership, an evangelistic focus, partnership work with other agencies and many parish-wide youth events, schemes and activities that connect young people from the sister churches.

There is the missional opportunity for our toddler groups to have a stronger connection with the church, supporting and offering discipleship for parents and carers.



National and International Ministry

Mission Statement:

We are passionate as a parish about the part we have to play in extending God’s kingdom across the world. As a parish we support several mission partners, both in Bolton and worldwide, most of whom have long-standing personal links to our churches. We have a National and International Ministry team which oversees our financial giving and support of mission work. In 2022/23 our giving to our mission partners will be approximately £40,000.

The purpose of the NIM team of St Peter’s Parish is to support our mission partners and raise awareness of world and national mission. This includes:

- To raise awareness of the work being done by our mission partners, and increase the focus on mission in general within the congregation
- To encourage vocations to mission, short and long-term, from within the congregation
- To encourage the congregation to support our mission partners through prayer, financial and practical support (‘PART’)
- To manage the finances supporting our mission partners
- To provide pastoral and practical support directly to our mission partners, including organising visits
- To pray individually and together for our mission partners and mission more generally



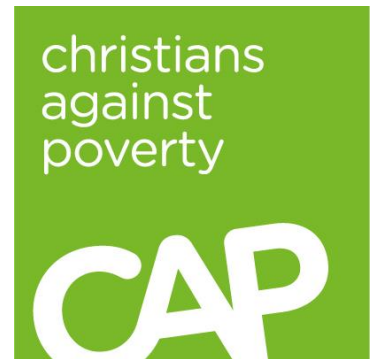
We support a wide range of missionaries who work in the following contexts and organisations:

- MEC / Operation Mobilisation (Worldwide)
- Release International (India)
- Daylight Project & Mother & Baby Group (Israel)
- Musalaha (Israel)
- Work among the Muslim population (Bolton)
- Urban Outreach (Bolton)
- Create (Bolton)
- Education India (India)
- CMS at Kathmandu International Study Centre
- Evangelism, worship leading and teaching in Central Asia
- Good News for Romania

We encourage vocations to mission and have seen people being called to long-term overseas mission in recent years.

CAP Centre

We partnered with Christians Against Poverty in 2010 as we felt it would give us a unique opportunity to demonstrate God’s love in practical ways to those in the wider community and to welcome people into the life of our church. We celebrated 10 years of the CAP Debt Centre in November 2020 and are able to look back and acknowledge God’s faithfulness: during that time, 120 families have gone debt free and over 80 people have chosen to respond to the gospel. Many of the latter have come to church for a period of time, and attended START and Alpha courses, but it is true to say we struggle to keep them coming and there are only a handful of former clients in our church now.



The CAP ministry is one that requires the whole church family and many church members have stepped into roles to serve, and along the way discovered new giftings. CAP work challenges one’s faith at times but also increases one’s expectancy that God can do anything in what can often seem impossible situations. People who seem hostile to faith can soften after just one visit where they are listened to and prayed for. There is a spiritual hunger in all of us and it is wonderful that the CAP ministry gives us the opportunity to share God’s story and our stories of his faithfulness. Our CAP Centre manager loves that what we do day in and day out shouts of his love and grace. He answers our prayers in abundance and transformation of lives unfold before us.



The Debt Centre has, over the years, sought to follow CAP’s lead in proactively helping people with the causes of debt. We have consistently run CAP Money courses for 11 years now. This is an excellent budgeting tool which has benefited many in our church and local community. From 2013 to 2017 we ran a CAP Job Club and then CAP Lifeskills. This course is structured around money, and in particular addressed the challenges people might face from living on a low income. Many clients found this a helpful addition to the debt help they received and we now refer to other CAP Lifeskills courses run by neighbouring churches.

We have a good connection with the local press and several clients have shared their story of finding freedom from debt and support from the church. You can read these via our website:

<https://www.stpetersparish.info/cap/style14.asp?P=115&M=0>

Acts 435

Acts 435 is an online giving charity, directly connecting those who want to give with those who are in genuine need of their help, through a network of local churches and charities. Our Acts 435 team was set up to provide a mechanism for church members to support financially those CAP clients in desperate need.

Music Ministry

We have a history of excellence in musical worship and that continues to the present day, with a broad range of musical styles and ensembles represented on a weekly basis across the parish. The majority of our sung worship across the parish is based on contemporary songs, but traditional hymns are used in our liturgical service and occasionally in other services as well.



We are blessed with a good number of gifted and creative musicians who lead worship at each at each of our worship centres. Instruments used include guitars, violin, saxophone, brass, keyboard, banjo, percussion, keyboard and of course, at St Peter’s church, the organ.

During the pandemic, our team of musicians excelled themselves by producing a range of pre-recorded music videos that we were able to use in our online services.



Our musicians also take their skills to the streets and play for outdoor events such as carol singing.



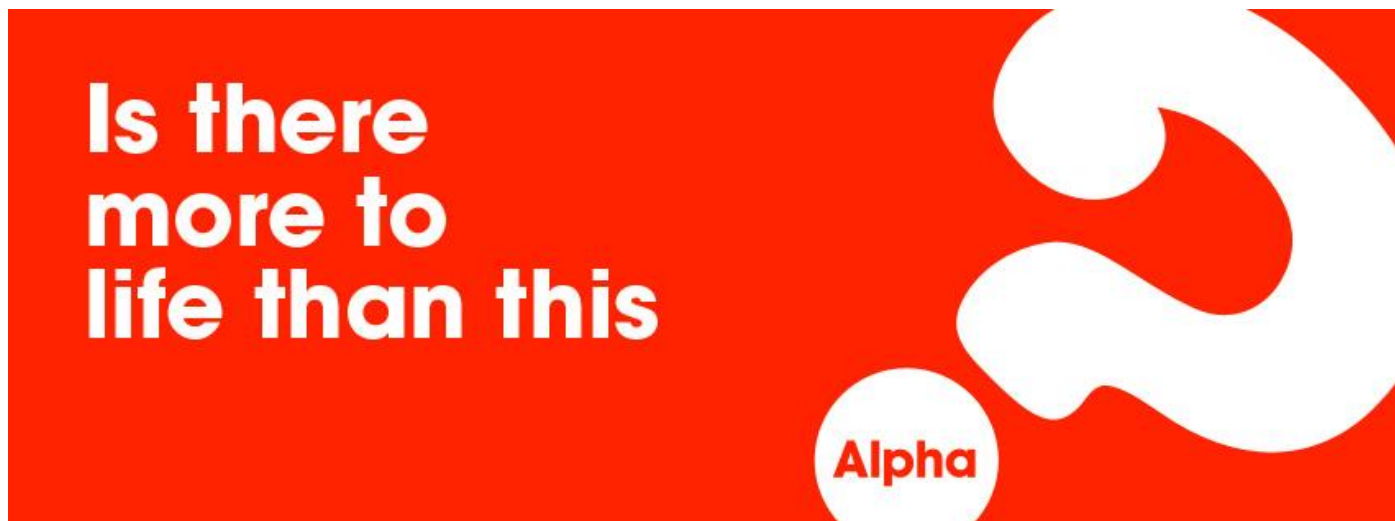
Several of our musicians are also songwriters and have recorded Christian albums. In the past, our musicians have held training workshops for worship leaders from other local churches. More recently, some of our musicians have organised events called Powerful Praise, in which attendees could learn and sing a kaleidoscope of worship songs.

Community Outreach & Mission

We are passionate about reaching people who need the Gospel, and that we do this in a number of ways; through relational ministries, through social action projects, and through large-scale events. With our large-scale events we have a vision to transform Bolton, and St Peter’s is a driving force behind cross-Bolton, cross-church Gospel initiatives like Party in the Park and Believe in Bolton. Some of the ministries involved in our community outreach are listed below.

Start and Alpha courses

We run Start groups and the Alpha Course throughout the year as small groups across the parish, as a key part of our evangelism strategy, to help people become Christians and grow in faith.



Home for Good



Home for Good believes that we all have a part to play to ensure that every child has the home they need. The charity works to mobilise the Church in the UK to respond to the needs of vulnerable children through families stepping forward to foster or adopt and churches wrapping around families with support, and to influence wider society through advocacy and engagement to create systemic change. At St. Peter’s, we have several families involved in adoption or fostering and we host the Bolton Home for Good group that provides peer support and advice to foster and adoptive families.

Party in the Park

Party in the Park was a community event hosted by St. Peter's parish which was held annually in Moss Bank Park between 2014 and 2019. The last time it was held was in July 2019, where a total of around 7,000 people attended and, at the time of writing, we are evaluating what form this type of community outreach event should take in the future.

The event started with an open-air church service in the morning, followed by a programme of main stage events that showcased local talent, ranging from school choirs to African drumming, and included an evangelistic message. There was also a Gazebo Village boasting a huge range of stalls and attractions from local churches, community groups, charities and organisations.



For the children, we created an inflatable area where youngsters could have a go at human hungry hippos, take on the giant wrecking ball or wipe out their friends in Zorb football!

For further details, please visit <https://www.theboltonnews.co.uk/news/17742802.party-park-2019-hailed-huge-success/>.

Fellowship & Discipleship

Connect/Life Groups

We have a large network of small groups, which we traditionally called Connect Groups, across the parish. We are in the process of re-launching our Connect Groups as 'Life Groups', with a focus on 'doing life together' and emphasising the opportunities for mission within small groups.

Some of these groups contain people from across the parish, but most are specific to the individual churches. They usually meet in local homes in an evening on a weekly or fortnightly basis, for Bible study, prayer and fellowship. We aim that everyone should be part of a small group so that they can grow and develop, and so discover God and engage with him in a friendly environment. Membership is good within our core church members, but overall the proportion of people in our churches who are in small groups is limited - many people are not part of a small group despite encouragement over several years!

Open Door

Open Door is a weekly ladies' group with a programme of bible study and guest speakers. It meets in the Parish Centre and has an average attendance of around 15 to 20; some of these people regularly attend our Sunday church services but for others this is their only connection with the parish.

Prayer and Pastoral Support

Regular evenings, weekends and weeks of prayer are held throughout the parish. In addition, there is a well-established prayer chain and prayer and ministry teams. It is recognised the need to ensure prayer is central to all we do as a parish and we are continually looking for new ways to involve all in prayer. We also host counselling sessions at the Parish Centre, run by a fully-qualified counsellor, in support of our church family and wider community.

Accessibility

Over the last couple of years (pre-COVID), our parish has taken small steps towards making our worship more accessible to everyone. Three of our worship centres have had basic accessibility audits completed. In December 2019, we held our first Sensory Carol Service, that aimed to enable families who would otherwise find attending a church service very difficult. Each of our worship centres have an "Access Box" that contains items that people with learning disabilities or autism may find helpful to use whilst participating

in a time of worship. This area of ministry continues to be developed across the parish by an Accessibility Group (sub-committee of the PCC) with representation from each church..

Social Groups

We run a variety of social groups for people both within our churches and more broadly within our communities. These include:

- Out and About, the parish walking group that meets monthly. It is open to all and travels to various starting points for organised walks!
- Art Group, in which local artists meet together in our Parish Centre where they occasionally hold exhibitions of their work.
- Stressbusters, a weekly badminton session for men hosted in the Parish Centre.



Parish Weekend Away

Every two years, the church family holiday away together for a weekend at Quinta, a residential Christian centre in Wales. There is a theme expounded by a guest speaker, with morning and evening sessions for adults and separate children’s groups covering the same teaching. The afternoons are generally free for people to explore the local area. Our next parish weekend away is taking place in September 2023.



Our Buildings

The Parish Centre

At St. Peter's we are extremely blessed to have St. Peter's Parish Centre. It is an attractive, Grade 2 listed, two-storey building located approximately 300m from our parish church, St. Peter's. Originally the Jubilee School, it underwent a million-pound redevelopment project in 2000 to form the Parish Centre as it is now. The home of the Parish Office and Bolton North CAP Centre, it is has also been a licensed place of worship, used by our congregations periodically when our other church buildings are out of action for renovations etc.

Several hundred people typically pass through the doors of the Parish Centre on a weekly basis to attend the diverse range of parish-wide activities on offer. Examples of these include bible study groups, courses such as Alpha, children's and youth groups, a dementia support group and cafés. It is also hired privately for activities and events, including performing arts groups and fitness classes, and also benefits from long-standing partnerships with schools and childcare providers. For example, Church Road Primary use our Sports Hall for PE on 4 afternoons a week and we have run a Before/After School club and holiday club from the centre. The building is a deceptively large and flexible space including a generous sports hall and several meeting rooms and lounges. Downstairs there is a large, fully equipped kitchen –capable of providing a full meal for up to 80 people – and also a small kitchenette upstairs used for serving refreshments, where The Coffee Room meets on a weekly basis.

Strengths include its situation in a prominent location next to Church Road Primary School, across the road from the community sports club and only a couple of minutes' walk from the popular and highly regarded Moss Bank Park. Our main meeting rooms are equipped with sound and A/V facilities and the Centre has benefitted from both internal and exterior re-decoration over the last few years making it an inviting and welcoming space.

The Centre has limited parking on site, but street parking is available and, as it is a residential area, we try to encourage responsible parking as we are mindful of the need to maintain good relationships with our neighbours.

Whilst not overtly obvious, the Parish Centre is unashamedly first and foremost a church building and it strives to provide a warm welcome to all who enter in, wherever they are at - a place where everybody is welcome, just as they are.