

## Parish Profile

### 1. General Information

**Parishes:** St Peter's, Forsbrook  
St Margaret's, Draycott le Moors

**Diocese:** Lichfield  
(Archdeaconry of Stoke on Trent)

**Incumbent:** Revd Jonathan Roberts  
The Rectory, Cheadle Rd,  
Blythe Bridge, Staffordshire ST11 9PW  
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**Date of Ordination:** Petertide 2012

**Length of time in current post:** 2 years 10 months

#### Previous Ministerial Experience:

- 2012-2015 Curate in the Benefice of Swynnerton, Tittensor, Cotes Heath & Standon (Stone Deanery, Staffordshire)
- 2009 – 2012 Ministerial Training and completion of Master's Degree at St John's College, Nottingham
- 2005 – 2009 Reader, St Peter's Church Woolton, (Diocese of Liverpool)
- 1998 – 2009 Primary School Teacher, including being on the Senior Management Team and a Mentor for Trainee Teachers

#### Personal Information:

I am married to Sophie and we have four children: Grace (16), Ewan (9), Theo (2) and Tabitha (5 months). Originally from Liverpool, we have found a happy home in Staffordshire and particularly in our current parishes which are genuine places of welcome and encouragement.

I am a life-long supporter of Liverpool Football Club, enjoy playing the piano and having fun with my family. I am passionate about teaching the Bible, enabling others to discover the joy of following Christ in the power of the Spirit, and working collaboratively with others to see God's kingdom grow.

**Nature of Training Post:** Training post for deacon who expects to be ordained priest

## 2. The Training Context:

### The Parish of Forsbrook

Blythe Bridge and Forsbrook are villages on the southeast edge of Stoke-on-Trent, which have merged together. The Ecclesiastical Parish has a current population of 6,542. The housing in the parish is mainly owner-occupied, with several very large houses. There are two main areas of housing association housing, originally built as council houses. There are some areas of new housing being built. The villages have a 'suburban' feel.



Blythe Bridge has two local supermarkets, a post office, chemist, a community-run library, community centre, and a village hall. There are a number of shops, cafes, pubs and small businesses. There are two repair garages, one of which sells petrol, and a tyre garage. There is a large Tesco and a B&Q just outside the village.

There are 3 primary schools (one is our church school); a school for children with social/emotional/mental health issues which serves a nearby catchment area in Stoke on Trent; and a high school. We have good links with many of these and would like to encourage further links.

There is a health centre with doctors and a second extensive surgery. There are various groups and societies, which meet in the parish.

The main open space and recreational provision in the parish is the recreation ground; which has 2 football pitches, extensive play facilities, and an informal brookside area. There are many pleasant walks around the two villages.

There is a railway station on the route between Stoke and Derby; and the A50 dual carriageway between the M6 and the M1 adjoins. There are also road links north to Cheadle and Leek, and south to Stone and Stafford. Buses run in four directions.

There are few employment opportunities in Blythe Bridge; the schools being the largest employers, followed by the shops. The majority of employed people work in Stoke-on-Trent.

### The Parish of Draycott le Moors

The Parish of Draycott in the Moors is one and a half miles from Blythe Bridge, and includes the hamlets of Totmonslow and Cresswell. It is a linear settlement approximately two miles long with many outlying farms. Draycott is a rural parish with a current population of 1,044;



it has no discernible village centre. There are plans for further housing developments which would see a significant increase in population.

Within the parish boundaries are the following establishments;

- Draycott Moor College, catering for children with a range of challenges and difficulties
- Draycott Sports Centre Limited, founded in 1972, is owned by its members and is known as Draycott Racquets and Fitness Club
- Blythe Bridge Cricket Club at Cresswell
- There are 2 Indian restaurants
- There are 2 public houses which also serve food
- A garden centre and local farm shop
- Blythe Business Park

### 3. The Churches

Whilst in relationship with each other, and having shared a Rector for 40 years, the two churches generally operate separately, with their own PCCs. Both churches have an evangelical heritage and are genuinely places of encouragement and welcome. Our Ministry Leadership Team has oversight over both churches. As a team, we meet on a monthly basis to read the Bible together, pray for one another and our churches, and to talk through various issues. The team currently comprises:

- The Rector
- 4 Churchwardens (2 from each parish)
- 3 licensed Readers
- A licensed Lay Pastoral Minister
- Our Children's and Youth Leader (employed 30 hours p/w)
- Our Messy Church Team Leader

We have recently been praying about growing the team and are seeking to identify and nurture leadership gifts within other members of our churches.

St Peter's has an electoral roll of 163 and an average ASA (average Sunday attendance) of 82. St Margaret's has an electoral roll of 51 and an average ASA of 25.



## (a) Mission and Vision

Both churches have been reflecting on their past, present and future over the last 18 months which has resulted in greater clarity in our sense of mission and vision. Both churches have developed the shared 'mission statement' which summarises the key areas of our mission as churches seeking to play their part in the growth of the Kingdom of God: Glorifying God; Following Jesus; Growing Disciples; Transforming Communities. Each church has also been seeking to discern God's vision for the future.



### St Peter's Forsbrook

Our vision for the next 5 years centres around **'becoming mission shaped'**. We have recognised that sometimes our church life has become shaped around our own preferences and inherited ways of being, and in order to see growth both numerically and in depth of faith, we need to re-shape our life together, becoming more accessible to those who do not yet belong or believe and shaping all that we do by our mission priorities.

Our Mission Action Plan, which is helping us to bring about our vision strategically, details the steps needed to be taken to achieve this vision and in 2018 key areas include:

- Establishing a pastoral care team
- Running a nurture course for young people and adults
- Renewing our website and use of social media
- Encouraging our church to be part of the 'Thy Kingdom Come...' initiative
- Managing our quinquennial inspection

### St Margaret's Draycott

Our vision for the next 5 years is: **'Church in the community; Church for the community: serving one another and sharing God's love.'**

We have recognised that sometimes our church life has been inward-looking instead of being outward-looking towards our community, and in order to enable others to know and experience God personally, we need to build better bridges into our community and demonstrate God's love for all.

Our Mission Action Plan, which is helping us to bring about our vision strategically, details the steps needed to be taken to achieve this vision and in 2018 key areas include:

- Planning a community event to celebrate 750 years of worship and witness in the community
- Host a Harvest Supper for those in our community who are housebound

- Offer to lead some community-based carol singing during December (not fundraising)
- Renewing our website and use of social media
- Decide on our pattern of worship and renew our noticeboard

**(b) Pattern of Worship**

At St Peter's, we aim to enable as many people as possible to encounter God and participate in our worship which happens at various times.

On Sundays we have **two types of service**, both of which draw on the riches of our Anglican tradition, past and present, using Common Worship, unless otherwise indicated.



Our **morning worship** (10.00am) is **informal in style**, being unrobed and music currently led either by our youth band or using the isingworship app. Our **evening worship** (6.00pm for most of the year, but 5.00pm in the winter months) is more **traditional in style**, with music led by our organist and choir. Each month follows a similar pattern:

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Informal Morning Worship</b> (10am)	Worship Together  All age – this service sometimes includes baptisms	Holy Communion,  including X:cite group for school age children	Service of the Word,  including X:cite group for school age children	Holy Communion,  including X:cite group for school age children	Service of the Word & Laying on of hands  including X:cite group for school age children
<b>Traditional Evening Worship</b> (6pm for most of the year; 5pm in the winter)	Holy Communion	Evening Prayer (BCP)	Holy Communion	Evening Prayer (BCP)	Evening Prayer (BCP) or 'Songs of Praise'

At other regular times, we hold:

A **said service of Holy Communion** on the **second Thursday of every month** starting at 10.30am. This is held in the welcome room foyer at St Peter's.

**Messy Church**, usually takes place on a **Saturday morning from 10.00am - 12.00pm** and includes a time of crafts, fun, prayer, an act of worship and ends with a meal together. Dates for Messy Church are advertised in the weeks leading up to the event – held about once every 6 -8 weeks.

**At St Margaret's**, our Sunday pattern of worship also follows a regular pattern, using Common Worship, unless otherwise indicated.

Sunday	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>
8am		Holy Communion (BCP)			
10am	Holy Communion	Service of the Word	Holy Communion	Service of the Word	
4pm					Holy Communion

Worship is generally led by members of the Ministry Leadership Team, though we are currently seeking to identify gifts in church members and give opportunities for testing and nurturing gifts of leading and preaching. We actively encourage lay involvement within worship, both children/young people and adults, and within all aspects of mission and ministry.



**(c) Occasional Offices (in the last 12 months)**

	St Peter's	St Margaret's	Total
<b>Baptisms</b>	8	1	9
<b>Weddings</b>	3	2	5
<b>Funerals</b>	20	5	25

This month we had our annual **confirmation** service at which there were 9 candidates confirmed by Bishop Michael (3 adults and 6 young people).



#### 4. Encouraging signs of growth

In 2016/7 we ran the diocesan course **Living Faith**. Around 25 members of our church completed this, 4 of whom have gone on to explore their vocation through the diocesan **Pathways** course. Additionally, a desire to continue meeting has resulted in a hunger for studying the Bible and the establishment of **'Connect'** which meets weekly. We have also bought **Bibles** for both churches for use during worship.



Some other ways of **growing disciples** have included running **Alpha**, **junior confirmation** course and a **Parenting Teenagers** course. All of these have been bearing fruit in terms of exploring faith and building good relationships, particularly with those who are newer to church life.

We appointed our **Children's and Youth Leader in 2016** who has been leading the development of mission and ministry with children, young people and their families. The post is funded in partnership with our local Methodist churches and has seen growth in our influence in local schools and helped develop our existing teams of volunteers. Our C&YL is seeking to explore how we can most effectively connect with and disciple children, young people and their families. We are currently exploring a new strategic direction for this work which focuses on discipleship and effectively incorporating people into our church families.

In 2015/16 we hosted a student from Germany as part of the Diocesan **St Chad's Volunteer programme**. This was a great opportunity for the student who came to Forsbrook for a year and great blessing for our church community, including our church school with whom she worked closely.



**Messy Church** was established a number of years ago at St Peter's but has grown significantly in the last year. We have a team who lead this expression of church and whilst there are between 60 – 80 attending on average, we saw 228 people on Good Friday. Messy Church is a fresh expression of church and is providing us with the opportunity to explore what discipleship might look like in new as well as inherited forms of church.



Other effective and ongoing ministries include **The Friendship Group** which meets fortnightly and offers friendship (and lunch/entertainment) to some of the older members of our local community; and **Tiddlers**, a group for toddlers and their carers. This group also has a number of older volunteers and demonstrates beautifully the ways generations can bless one another.



In 2017/8, St Peter's PCC made the decision to shape its **worship pattern** to become more intentionally missional. The development of our **informal morning worship** and **traditional evening worship** has seen some significant growth, particularly in the mornings, with a number of newer families attending worship and becoming integrated into the church family. A particular encouragement has been being able to use the gifts of some of our younger members within worship, for example the establishment of a youth band and the nurture of young leaders in our children's *X:cite* group.



## 5. Challenges for the future

Important challenges to be praying through and addressing include:

- Becoming more prayerful as churches
- Developing disciples and leaders of all ages
- Thinking biblically about how to give of our time, talents and treasure
- Creating a benefice administrator post
- Encouraging evangelism
- Building stronger relationships within our communities

## **6. How does the incumbent see the role of trainer?**

I have been an incumbent for almost 3 years, having completed a curacy within the diocese. I have, therefore, fairly recently completed my own curacy training with a TI who provided an effective model of training. I understand from my own experience the opportunities and challenges of curacy, and the training needs a curate has both generally and in relation to Phase 2.

Prior to ordination, I was a primary-school teacher for 12 years, including being on the Senior Management Team and a Key Stage Manager. I was also a mentor for trainee teachers from Liverpool Hope University and enjoyed the experience of enabling trainees to develop their skills and confidence in the classroom.

In this stage of my first incumbency, I have enjoyed building and encouraging a Ministry Leadership Team, trying to encourage gifts within others. This team would provide a supportive environment in which a curate could continue their own Christian formation, be involved in ministry and develop key skills and competencies, and I am sure that the team would benefit from his/her membership of it.

I would provide a supportive relationship in which there would be regular, planned opportunities for shared theological reflection on practice and appropriate levels of support in ministry and training which would evolve as the curacy progressed and adapt to the needs of the curate. I would be supportive of enabling full participation in the diocesan programme requirements and ensuring that a study-day (as well as rest days according to diocesan policy) was part of the normal weekly pattern.

## **7. Areas of likely responsibility for a curate?**

A curate would become an active member of our growing Ministry Leadership Team and would be expected to share leadership within this team as it prayerfully and strategically gives oversight and direction to the mission and ministry of our churches. Particular areas of responsibility would depend on the experience, gifts and training needs of the curate and would be negotiated with the incumbent. Potential areas are likely to be related to growing disciples and developing the gifts and leadership of others.

I am excited about working in partnership with a curate who wants to discover how God wants to shape and prepare them in *this* particular context (which is an exciting and encouraging place to be) so that they might be equipped for whatever he calls them to in the future.

## **8. Accommodation**

Should a curate come to join our team to serve their title post, the diocese have indicated that appropriate accommodation would be provided.

## **9. Who should be contacted in the first instance?**

The Revd Frances Wilson, Bishops' Director of Ordinands, Diocese of Lichfield

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