

THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
DIOCESE OF
WORCESTER



Title Parishes 2023

Holy Trinity, Old Hill
Profile pack

Keywords: Urban, socially mixed, conservative charismatic evangelical

Welcome to the Diocese of Worcester!



Bishop John Inge, Bishop of Worcester:

“Thank you for showing interest in serving your curacy in this diocese. I believe it to be one full of potential at a creative moment in a diocese where exciting things are happening”

It is exciting because...

- we are developing creative new patterns of ministry in these changing times: though there are fewer stipendiary clergy than in the recent past there are now more people offering licensed and authorised lay ministry than ever before.
- we are implementing, after much reflection and consultation, an imaginative ‘Kingdom People’ vision which seeks to envision our people in their core task of proclaiming the Kingdom.
- differences in ‘churchmanship’ are not divisive in a diocese which has a genuine ‘family feel’ to it.
- we have a dynamic and mission minded Bishop’s Staff team committed to working with lay and ordained colleagues throughout the Diocese to join in God’s mission.

About the Diocese of Worcester

- the Diocese of Worcester is one of 41 (42 including the Diocese in Europe) that make up the Church of England.
- the Diocese of Worcester also forms part of the Province of Canterbury.
- the diocese covers an area of 670 square miles and includes the County of Worcestershire, the Metropolitan Borough of Dudley, and a few parishes in northern Gloucestershire, southeast Wolverhampton and Sandwell - so we are not short on variety (it’s a great place to serve a curacy, because we have nearly every context you could imagine!)
- From the urban north, with its impressive history and cultural mix, to the agricultural south where the rich colours of rural life flavour many people's day to day experience, the diocese has much to offer to visitor, resident and worshipper alike.
- The diocese was founded in around 679 by St Theodore of Canterbury for the tribe of the Hwicce. Today the diocese covers a population of 877,000. We have 98 benefices, 172 parishes and 275 churches.

In 2019:

- Over 11,000 people attended a church service on an average week
- 9,000 attended a church service on an average Sunday
- There were 12,000 on the electoral roll of our churches
- 15,000 people attended Easter Services
- 36,500 people attended Christmas services
- 1,500 children and adults were baptised in our churches
- 610 weddings were conducted, and 2,300 people had a Church of England funeral in church or crematorium.



Kingdom People

In 2010, a 2020 Vision Group was set up by Bishop's Council to try to discern what God's future vision might be for the Anglican Church in Worcestershire and Dudley. Discussion in this group identified that our churches should be places where the Kingdom is our core conversation and where the Kingdom values set out by Bishop John of love, compassion, justice and freedom are evident.

Following research undertaken in 2012 into what churches were already doing and what factors helped or hindered them in their activities, a **Kingdom People** vision has been set out. This is a vision for a Church which enables its people to be...



- **Deeply rooted in prayer and study of the scriptures**
- **Renewed and transformed by regular worship**
- **Equipped to witness to the gospel of love, compassion, justice and freedom**
- **Dedicated to helping children, young people and young adults to belong and be nurtured in faith**
- **Devoted to growing deeply in discipleship, offering our time and talents and money to God**
- **Resourced and released to minister to others**
- **Ready to engage with and serve our community**
- **Committed to making our buildings fit for purpose as a spiritual and community resource.**

The Kingdom People initiative aims to be a gift to the parishes and not an additional burden. It aims to provide a framework in which churches might flourish and grow rather than impose a blueprint of how every church should look. It has been promoted to parishes from autumn 2013. This includes the temporary employment of a Kingdom People Development Officer to encourage parishes to take up the “gift” and identify and train a network of volunteer facilitators to help them discern God’s way forward.

Ministry

There is a broad range of Churchmanship within the Diocese of Worcester. The Diocese has around 120 full-time stipendiary clergy, plus around 40 Non-stipendiary and Ministers in Secular Employment. We are also blessed with a large number of retired clergy, who continue to provide ministry to parishes across our diocese. There is an extensive lay ministry in the diocese with 180 Licensed Lay Ministers (Readers) and a large number of Authorised Lay Ministers, who have completed a year’s training course in areas such as worship, children’s and youth work, evangelism and parish administration.

Education

In the Diocese of Worcester, we are committed to work in schools and tertiary education. The diocesan area includes three Local Authorities, Worcestershire, Dudley and Sandwell. There are 97 Primary Church Schools in the Diocese and three Secondary Schools. The Diocese also offers programmes and resources to all schools in the area. There are a growing number of schools becoming Academies in which the Worcester Diocesan Academies Trust is developing a key role in that process.

Title Parish General Information

Parish:

Holy Trinity, Old Hill, Greater Dudley
Deanery, Diocese of Worcester

<https://www.holytrinity.org.uk/>

Incumbent

Rev Nick Gowers
58 Wrights Lane
Cradley Heath
B64 6RD
Tel: 0121 533 2513
Email: nick.gowers@holytrinity.org.uk



Date of ordination: September 2008

Length of time in present role:
9 years (started July 2013)

Personal information, previous posts and
experience:

Other responsibilities and duties currently
undertaken by incumbent:

- Informal mentor to previous curate, now vicar of three adjacent churches
- Lecturer on module at West Midlands Ministry Training Course
- Deanery ALM Worship Leader Course Leader 21-22

Previous posts:

- Curate, St Leonard's Exeter, 2008-2013
- Vicar, Holy Trinity Old Hill 2013 – present day

Previous training experience:

2018-2013 Rev Richard Hackett

Nature of post:

This is a training post for a deacon who expects to be ordained priest, and also for

those who may wish to stay as a permanent deacon.

The context: the parish setting

Population ~ 10,000
Industrial
Urban

Geographical spread – The parish is one square mile of conurbation in Black Country. Previously heavy industry, the area has been in decline as industry has been replaced by housing.

Distances - The church building is at the mid-point north-south of a parish that is a few kilometers long but no more than one kilometer wide.

Housing- The parish contains a mixture of private, council and social housing, which are mainly maisonettes, terraced and semi-detached with two blocks of high-rise flats.

Public transport - Buses go through the area to larger centres e.g. Blackheath, Cradley Heath, Merry Hill, Birmingham and the QE Hospital in Birmingham. Trains from Old Hill depart every thirty minutes to Birmingham City Centre, taking 20 minutes. On the same line, trains to Worcester take 40 minutes from Cradley Heath.



- Four remaining pubs.
- Former thriving Victorian high-street, now mainly convenience stores, convenience food and empty shops.
- Care Homes: Roxborough Care Home and Trinity Care Home.
- Sheltered accommodation at Apsley House.
- Local recently built Community Fire Station at Haden Cross but no longer police or ambulance bases in the parish.
- Haden Hill Leisure Centre with swimming pools, swim school, gym, classes and courts.
- Haden Hill House and Park – historic house and parkland with historic connections to the church.

Near to the parish

- St Michael's C of E secondary school less than a mile away up the hill.
- Nearest hospital is non-A&E community rehab hospital (Rowley Regis Hospital) and nearest acute hospital is Russell's Hall in Dudley (3.5 miles away)
- Merry Hill shopping centre 2.8 miles away.
- Birmingham Bull Ring shopping, Theatres, National Arena, Birmingham Symphony Hall etc. all 20 minutes by train (plus walking time in the city centre).

- Clent Hills National Trust and Waseley Hills Country Park both 15 mins by car.
- Tesco, Aldi, Lidl, Sainsburys, Asda all within 1.5 miles.
- Good links (10 min drive) to Junction 2 and Junction 3 on the M5.

Social mix

The parish is increasingly diverse, albeit with a majority white working class, and a significant Pakistan-background Muslim community.

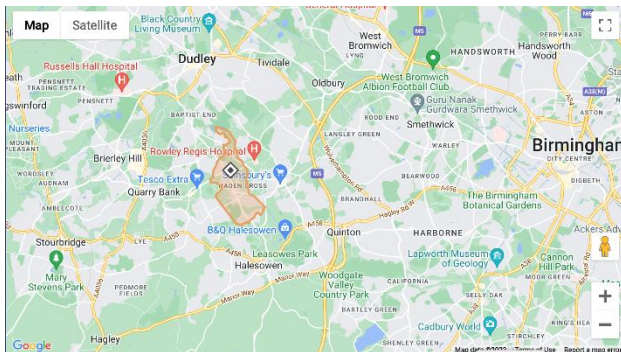
The parish is divided by the railway line with the area to the south more likely to have a higher (tertiary) level of education and income.

Within the parish

- Schools. There are four schools in the parish. Primary Schools are Temple Meadow, Old Hill Primary, and Reddall Hill. The secondary school is Ormiston Forge Academy.
- Two GP practices.
- Three other churches: Ebenezer Baptist, Spring Meadow Baptist, St James Wesleyan Reform.
- Two mosques, one JW meeting place.
- Thriving Spring Meadow Social Club.



The neighbourhood is one of the 10% most multiply deprived neighbourhoods in England (ref Sandwell 035 LSOA, 2019 data), ranked 2,826 out of 32,844 neighbourhoods (1 is most deprived) on the index of multiple deprivation. The most deprived domain within that analysis is that of Income Deprivation of Older People (i.e. aged 60 and over) being ranked at 760 out of 32,844. Other significant social issues include poverty, debt, drug use and mental health issues.



For more information see:

<https://datashine.org.uk/#table=QS202EW&col=QS202EW0002&ramp=RdBu&layers=BTTT&zoom=14&lon=-2.0633&lat=52.4718>

Church buildings

Holy Trinity is a single church parish.

Church tradition

Holy Trinity is conservative, charismatic and evangelical with strengths in Bible-teaching,

community engagement, children and youth work and world mission.

Electoral roll and church membership

There are currently 140 people on the electoral roll.

Sunday worship gatherings

Sunday morning services at 10.30am follow a monthly pattern of;

- All Age
- Holy Communion
- Worship and Word
- Morning Worship

During August this is replaced by Sundays in Summer (a simpler shorter service).

Usual attendance at these post Covid is approx. 80 adults and 20 children.

Sunday evening services at 6.30pm follow a pattern of:

- Evening Prayer (Common Worship)
- Holy Communion – once a month

Usual attendance at these is approx. 25 (with approx. 25% attending morning and evening services)

Weekday services:

Soup and Soul, 11.30am -12.00, on Wednesdays in term time, which is a brief service with lunch to follow.

Occasional offices

Baptisms 8 p.a.

Weddings 4 p.a.

Funerals 10 p.a.

Pattern of daily prayer

There are no daily office or daily prayers, but staff team meet for prayer every Wednesday 9.00-9.30am, with staff meeting monthly 9.00-11.00am.

Staff team

Lead Community Worker (20 hrs/wk)

Youth Worker (24 hrs/wk)

Assistant Community Worker (4 hrs/wk)

Administrator (22 hrs/wk)



Lay involvement

Lots of church members serve in all aspects of the church life, including in children's and youth ministries, Growth Groups, community work, and the practical side of running the church.

Two "Licensed Lay Ministers" help with leading services, preaching and running various areas of the church ministry.

Six "Authorised Lay Ministers"- recently trained and now with individual mentors who are involved in leading services.



House, Study and Prayer groups

Growth Groups:

A good number of the congregation are in about 8 different growth groups for Bible study, discipleship and prayer.

Monthly prayer evening attended by approx. 15 people in person and on line.

Our Mission Support Team helps us support ten mission partners and nine organisations.

Parochial organisations:

We have a Rainbow and Brownie group who hire the hall but with no formal links.

Areas of particular mission and ministry

Engagement with community

Weekly: Food Bank
Debt Advice
Trinity Treasures tots group

Annual: Open Air Service and BBQ
Christmas Lights Switch On
and Christmas Card
Competition

Involvement in Old Hill Festival

Children and youth work

Sunday Clubs for children up to 15
Tuesday Club for children in the community school years 4 to 8
Midweek youth groups
Annual October Half Term Holiday Club

Open the Book assemblies in two primary schools relaunched in September 2022.



Opportunities for the development of fresh expressions of church

Particular future plans already established:

Clarifying vision and focus for 2026 which is our 150th year anniversary: New work with identified Mission Accompanier – a core group has been formed and is working with the Vicar and Mission Accompanier

Operational change for Debt Advice service.

Areas and types of co-operation with other local churches

Members of other churches are regular attendees at 'Soup and Soul'.

Prior to Covid, churches in the parish joined together for a Good Friday Walk of Witness.

Other Activities

Alpha/ Start evangelistic courses – run once a year.

Bible Course – or other discipleship courses run annually.

Vision and Priorities

How does the church see itself?

Evangelical: Huge importance placed on being Bible-based and Bible believing, and so valuing good teaching every Sunday by all preachers and service leaders, and supported by Growth Groups (ie home/ house groups) during the week.

Prayerful: Prayer is foundational for all our activity.

Outward focussed: We seek to be an outreaching mission-focussed church, both locally and world-wide.

We are blessed by members attending the New Wine, Word Alive and Keswick conventions/festivals.

What is its vision of mission?

We seek to make mature disciples of Jesus who, in love, serve our communities both in evangelism and practical love.



What are the incumbent's and PCC's vision and priorities?

Mission is our main priority, which underpins all activity, seeking to make the Good News known in all our activity.

Good teaching is high priority with leaders seeking to deepen faith in its members

We are together seeking to clarify how we prepare our church to celebrate its 150 anniversary in 2026, in terms of mission, growth and management of our buildings.

Incumbent's understanding of the Role of Training

Training is vital for the ongoing growth of the church. I see training a curate as mentoring a junior colleague, walking alongside in order to help develop them into the person and minister God is calling them to be, particularly helping establish good habits and practices while they grow within all that Holy Trinity can offer.

What is the likely role of the curate in future plans?

We would like to be able to serve the wider diocese, so the hope would be that the curate could be sent out into Worcester Diocese. With our previous curate that included an experimental transitional year.

Areas of particular responsibility for curate in training

Depending on gifting, personal development and the needs of Holy Trinity, we would hope to offer the curate an area of ministry to oversee.

Curacy Accommodation

The diocese purchased a four-bedroom new-build property on Denby Road in 2018 for the then new curate. I believe this will be used again if suitable. It has a garage and garden.



Additional Information

The PCC gladly affirms the Evangelical Alliance Basis of Faith (here <https://www.eauk.org/about-us/how-we-work/basis-of-faith>) and upholds the *Jerusalem Declaration* (found within this page <https://www.gafcon.org/resources/the-complete-jerusalem-statement-2008>).

Who should be contacted in the first instance?

Diocesan Director of Ordinands

The Revd Dr John Fitzmaurice
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Worcester
WR1 2RS

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jfitzmaurice@cofe-worcester.org.uk

The process of formation, training and assessment in the Diocese of Worcester

Curacy is, first and foremost, a period of formation and training undertaken for future ministry. Although a curacy is an opportunity for ministry in its own right, it is undertaken with a view to preparation for the future – regardless of whether the curate is non-stipendiary or stipendiary. This training is the shared responsibility of the curate, the training incumbent, and the DDO. Primary resources for the successful outcome of this training are:

1. **The curate** – who brings experience, professional life, Christian faith and recent training from theological course or college to the new ministry. He or she needs to be allowed and encouraged to bring all of this into ministry and continued training – alongside a willingness to learn.
2. **The training incumbent** – who brings their own experience and needs to be able to share this, with vulnerability and responsibility, to help the curate find his or her own patterns of sustainable ministry.
3. **The parish** – which should have its own sense of vocation to train and develop the ministry of the whole people of God, and will provide the primary context for feedback in the curate's early ministry.
4. **The Formation Criteria and Assessment** – which are national guidelines setting out the aims for the curacy, for all partners in the training relationship to work towards.



The Diocesan IME programme

The primary training context is the parish (in the case of MSE curates, additionally, in the workplace). However, the diocese provides additional training for all curates. This is generally held on seven Saturdays in the year, with a residential weekend in January.

All curates, stipendiary and non-stipendiary are expected to attend the IME days. There is also one additional evening session for new deacons, an additional evening session for new priests and a full day for curates in the third year looking to a post of responsibility beyond the curacy. It has proved a good idea to invite training incumbents to one IME session, and this happens from time to time.

The Training Programme

The Diocesan element of IME Phase 2 is based on a three-year rolling programme of study days, taught across year groups. The themes of these study days are closely related to the Formation Criteria and seek to amplify and add depth to the curates' experience in their ministerial context. There is an annual residential weekend currently held at Sarum College as well as a Quiet Day. All curates also take part in a

small monthly theological reflection group. It is expected that Diocesan IME Study Days take precedence over parish commitments on the same day.

Stipendiary curates undertake two short placements while self-supporting curates undertake one. Curates are encouraged to undertake these placements in contexts which their training parish are unable to provide.

EKM Exchange

The Diocese of Worcester has a partnership link with the Evangelische Kirche in Mitteldeutschland and as part of their curacy Worcester curates both to visit newly-ordained pastors in Germany and to learn something of the challenges of ministry there and to host them in Worcester.

