**DURHAM DIOCESE**

**THE PARISH OF CHRISTCHURCH**

**STOCKTON-ON-TEES**

***PARISH PROFILE 2024***



**St Chad’s, Roseworth**

**TS19 9JN**



**St John the Baptist Church, Durham Road**

**TS19 0DZ**

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**Our Diocesan Vision -** An introduction from Bishop Sarah

This is an exciting time to be exploring joining the Diocesan family in Durham Diocese. We are on the cusp of a fresh chapter in our mission and ministry together. We are currently discerning with the National Church who will be the next Bishop of Durham, called to lead as we seek to make real our vision for the transformation we so desire across our Diocese. We are deeply encouraged by the award this year of significant national funding, demonstrating real confidence in our vision.

Our strategy for transformation and missional growth (‘Called to Fruitfulness’) is an opportunity and invitation for each of our parishes to step out in faith together, responding practically to our priorities to Challenge Poverty, Energise Growth, Care for God’s Creation and Engage with Children, Youth and Young Adults. Making this a reality will look different in every community. In some places it will come about in collaboration with others. Nobody is expected to do everything immediately or alone, but we are all invited and expected to find ways to respond relevantly.

In the Parish of Christchurch, Stockton this feels particularly relevant. We sense the importance of Energising Growth – in discipleship and in the number of people served by and engaging in the life of our churches. We also sense the importance of Challenging Poverty, Engaging with Children and Young People and Caring for God’s Creation in an area with lots of families, with some significant pockets of poverty, and with deeply rooted communities that still look to, and are open to, the local church.

There is an exciting opportunity in this post for the new Priest-in-Charge to work with the PCC to make a plan for developing the mission of the church to enable people to begin a journey into Christian faith. Christchurch can draw down some significant additional funding to resource that (see p.5 of the Profile for details).

In praying for a new Priest for St Chad’s, Roseworth and St John’s, Durham Road we are looking for someone excited by and wanting to be part of this vision and new future. Together we pray hopefully:

***Loving God****, guiding the people of Durham Diocese faithfully through the years:*

*We thank you for saints who have marked our path,*  
*young and old, known and unknown, from all places and in all walks of life.*  
*Help us to find your way in our generation:*

*transformed by your truth, sharing your life, blessing our communities.*

*Through Jesus Christ our Lord,* ***Amen.***

We look forward to meeting together and sharing in this with you.

A person wearing a priest's collar and glasses

Description automatically generatedIn Christ

**+Sarah**

**Bishop of Jarrow, Acting Bishop of Durham**

**Introduction**

**The Parish of Christchurch, Stockton on Tees in THE DIOCESE OF DURHAM**

The Parish includes the areas of Hardwick, Salters Lane, Roseworth, Sheraton Park, Ragworth, Primrose Hill, Woodlands and Fern Park. The population is approx. 19,500 and includes some areas of the highest deprivation in the country. There are three primary schools, a Roman Catholic Primary, a Community Primary School (Rosebrook) and our Church of England primary school, St John the Baptist Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School which was recently rated as ‘good’ following a SIAMS inspection. (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools).

We have two centres of worship in the parish, St Chad’s on Roseworth and St John the Baptist on Durham Road:

**Who we are:**

We are sincerely praying that the person who comes will enjoy living and working with us . We will do everything we can to enable this to happen for our new Priest in Charge and their family.

We do have challenges but this is a great place to live and work!

We are a faithful band of pilgrims, who are seeking someone to lead us further on our pilgrimage in the parish that we serve. We are committed in sharing the gospel to those around us, seeking out new ways of sharing God’s love to those that we meet.

Although at the present time our human resources are quite stretched, there is a strong and committed lay ministry within the parish, including two licensed lay ministers who are also trained in funeral ministry, and two members of the congregation who have completed the ‘Speaking in Church’ (Wings for Worship) course.

**Worship**

Sunday morning worship takes place at 11.00am at St Chad’s with the Eucharist, using Common Worship. Attendance is usually 20-25, with more at baptisms and special occasions.

There is a midweek Holy Communion or Service of the Word on Tuesday mornings at 10.00am in St John’s. At this we are often joined by a class from St. John the Baptist School. During the vacancy the Eucharist service for the school has been adapted to include a Godly Play story for the Gospel. At other times a member of the church leads Service of the Word.

We have few weddings at St Chad’s, whilst St John’s tends only to be used for weddings by members of the congregation.

Both churches are used regularly for funerals especially St John’s as this is opposite Durham Road Cemetery.

**Mission: Further Investment in Christ Church**

In our Vacancy Audit Process the diocesan facilitator working with us recognised that we as a church are working hard to serve our local community, and share the God’s love through our outreach. It is a community with many needs, and we do not have huge resources.

We were delighted to be told after the audit that it had been agreed not only that a new full-time minister should be appointed, but that the bishop wants us to be able to benefit from further missional investment.

In 2024, the Diocese of Durham was awarded a substantial grant from the Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board (who administer Church Commissioners’ grants to the Church of England) to resource our programme of Diocesan Transformation. This is a comprehensive, strategic vision to enable all parishes to increase our mission, deepen in discipleship, and engage younger generations. While working through our Vacancy Audit, our Diocesan facilitator recognised our church’s heart to serve our local parish and share God’s love through our outreach. Our community has many needs and we do not have significant resources, so we were delighted to be told that Christchurch is able to benefit from a Missional Investment through the Diocesan Transformation programme.

We have been invited to work with our new minister and the Diocesan Growing Churches team to develop a missional plan for growth, building on our current outreach and specifically targeted at reaching people in our community who are not yet part of the regular congregation to begin a journey of faith and grow in discipleship. Funding of up to £180,000 over five years will be available to resource our plan, which could be used towards an employed role, equipment, activities or a combination of these.

**One of the key tasks of our new Priest-in-Charge will be to work with the PCC and congregation to shape a vision and form a plan, with the support of the Diocesan team, and then lead on delivering this plan in the coming years.**

We are looking forward to building our plans and reaching out to our community.

**Mission and Activities**

**Chad’s Pantry**

St. Chad’s Pantry opened just over three years ago and has grown in that time. This is a key part of the churches mission to help those who may be/are in need in a time of financial uncertainty. There is a steering committee who have regular meetings to discuss the running of the pantry, (all decisions are made together.) These are committed volunteers along with being regular worshippers. There are also a few people who come along to assist at various sessions.

The pantry is open twice a week, Thursdays 9 until 11 and Sundays 9.30 until 10.30 (prior to the church service at 11am). The steering committee are also in the building on Wednesday mornings in order to take the delivery from Fare Share.

The pantry is also a member of Stockton Food power Network, that keeps us in touch with other food charities in the area and advises of funding and training opportunities. We have a food hygiene rating of 5. Roseworth Big Local have

funded various projects within the church and have, and continue to fund, the pantry’s bill to Fare Share. Funding has also been received from Stockton Borough Council (grants for a Warm Space/money to be spent on food). Tesco Stockton are also very generous in donating freezer items to the pantry on a regular basis.

Over the past two years Rosebrook School have donated all their harvest goods to the pantry and once a year a cycling group have donated to the pantry. November also sees a large donation of new toys and these are given free to parents.

People who come along to the pantry do not need to referred and the only information we need from them is their postcode and how many people are in their household. The pantry also offers a place where people feel welcome and a chance to chat and make friends.

**Care homes**

Two care homes are visited each month, Piper Court and Stockton Lodge.

The residents enjoy a service with an opening prayer, maybe one or two hymns, a bible reading or story with a short reflection, general prayers, and the Lord’s prayer.

**Prayer walks - Walking in Faith**

Upon completion of the Growing Leaders course, and with a view to creating a presence in Hardwick, several members of the congregation did prayer walks round the estate. We hope to eventually have a permanent Plant there .We will resume the walks in spring 2025.

**Social Activities**

The parish organizes social and fund raising activities, these have included: Summer Fairs and Christmas Coffee mornings, Shrove Tuesday Holy Beetle Drive with pancakes and entertainment; Harvest Suppers + Pie and Peas, Walsingham weekend with St Michael’s, Norton; Quiz nights.

Links with The Dales and Lustrum Vale across Durham Road:

Clients have come to the Tuesday services, and two have been baptized as a result.

During rebuilding at The Dales, they hired our car park, and in return when we have big events at the weekend we can now use theirs for overflow parking.

**Chat Chew ‘n’ Choose**

On Tuesdays, following the 10am service, tea and coffee are served. We are then joined by several local residents. They enjoy a chat, some play chess or knit. We then have a light lunch which is provided by one of our team, and this is followed by a game of Bingo, with chocolate prizes. All is free, however donations are accepted,

**Book Club**

The Book Club meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, 4.30- 5.15 pm. This is run by one of our church members. A set of books is provided by the library service each month, chosen from a catalogue of resources. There are 8 members at present, from a variety of backgrounds. Our discussions are invariably interesting and often away from the original theme. A charge of £1 per session covers costs.

**Ladies with Learning Disabilities Group**

This group meets on alternate Thursday mornings, and is run by an NHS team. They do various activities ( not open to ‘drop ins’).

**Carbon zero eco-group / environment**

We have a small group looking at how to lower our carbon footprint. Both churches have now achieved the A Rocha EcoChurch bronze award (ecochurch.arocha.org.uk). Various schemes are currently being looked at to this end, such as infra-red heaters, secondary glazing etc. The ceiling at St. Chad’s was insulated in the last few years. As many lights as possible now have low energy LED bulbs.

The Community Payback scheme have been working on St. John’s garden, and are also going to do some excellent work in the grounds of St. Chad’s.

**Local Elections**

Both St Chad’s and St. John’s buildings are used as Polling Stations for local and/or national elections.

**Electoral Roll**

There are currently 42 people on the electoral roll, of whom 14 live outside the parish.

**Safeguarding**

We have a Parish Safeguarding Officer and a DBS validator. Our PCC has adopted the requirements set out in the Church of England framework ‘Promoting a safer Church’ for the care and protection of children, young people and adults at risk of harm and abuse. It is a high priority in the parish, with the policies renewed annually and displayed in the church.

**The Church Buildings**

St John’s was built in 1983 as a modern multi-functional building, which was completely refurbished in 2004/5 following a flood.

It has a beautiful Lady Chapel used as a Quiet Space, a small meeting room is available for small group meetings. Music is provided either by an iPod, CD player or through the Clavinova if an organist is available. A data projector and screen are available in the main hall.

There is a small well equipped kitchen which has been given a 5 \* Food Hygiene certificate. there is also an office equipped with a printer/photocopier.

There is a unisex toilet equipped for disabled use.

The front of the building has a lowered kerb for wheelchair access. There is a car park to accommodate approximately 20 vehicles.

There is also an attractive enclosed garden which was part funded by the European Union, which is popular for wedding photographs as well as being a peaceful place to sit. Community groups can hire the church throughout the week which brings in an important part of our income.

A circular stone wall with a green lawn

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

A brick church with a cross on top

Description automatically generated**St Chad’s was built in 1956.** Again, it was built as a multi-purpose building, which has received some refurbishment.

There is a unisex toilet equipped for disabled use and small kitchen, both recently refurbished with funding from Roseworth Big Local.

The front of the church has been adapted with a lowered kerb for wheelchair access. There is also a Lady Chapel which provides a quiet space for private prayer or for a mid-week service.

The Sacristy is at the back of the church (next to the organ) which doubles up as the Parish Office.

The pipe organ in the West End of the Church, which is still in use when needed, is over 100 years old, and an iPod or laptop and screen are used when no organist is available.

The font is thought to be over 1000 years old, and was found in the grounds of St. Mary’s Church, Norton.

The roof has recently been renovated.

CCTV has been installed, again with funding from Roseworth Big Local.

The Church sits in its own ground, which is enclosed by a hedge, and a small partly enclosed area between the vicarage and the church.

**St John the Baptist Church of England Primary School**

*Kerry Coe Head Teacher, St John’s CofE Primary School, writes,*

The new parish priest will be a Foundation Governor and I look forward to working closely in partnership with them to continue the strong link between school and parish and to explore further opportunities to engage fully with the community we serve.

The school was originally opened in 1941 by Arthur John Bott who was St John’s priest at the time. His zeal for Christian education led him to conceive this church school, the building of which was made possible by his dauntless energy. His wife Helen Margaret Bott MBE was also a Foundation Manager.

Our vision sees St John’s school at the heart of the community, with God at the centre of what we do with and for each other. Through our Christian ethos and worship, we embed the Christian Values in our children, to live as Jesus taught us to.

We offer a creative, enriched and challenging curriculum – that develops RESPECT for themselves and others, RESILIENCE to tackle challenges and READINESS for the next stage and their aspirational futures – to meet the needs of all learners through a highly inclusive and inspirational approach.

We encourage each other to become tolerant, forgiving and honest, promoting perseverance, confidence and respect for all people everywhere.

Above all we ensure that everyone feels welcomed, safe and loved – that they belong: ‘Everyone Different, Everyone Loved’

The school is an average sized primary school in an area of high deprivation. The community is largely white working class with approximately 75% of children being eligible for free school meals. Most children enter our 2 year old or Nursery provision with knowledge and skills that are below, or well below, those which are expected for their age.

Our proportion of children with SEN, (Special Educational Needs) is high and school is additionally funded to host a 20 place Enhanced Provision for Cognition and Learning and a 10 place Physical and Medical Provision for the local Authority. In September 2024 we also opened a new Specialist Unit (currently 24 places) for children with Communication and Interaction needs. We are well known for being a fully inclusive school and support children who are at risk of/have been permanently excluded from other schools.

The school works really hard to support and work in partnership with parents/carers and we have been accredited and reaccredited with the Leading Parent partnership Award several times.

We were the first school to achieve the national Governor Mark and our Governors are strong networkers with the local authority, the business community and other local schools. Church foundation Governor, Sue Symington is the Chair and all Governors take on Designate Governor Roles which suit their individual talents.

**Priorities of the PCC:**

Exploring new ways of being church; to seek to grow disciples inside and outside the church, nurturing new and established Christians.

* Developing a mission strategy
* Developing ministry among children, young people and families so that more people of all ages share in worship and leadership
* Developing a team ministry across the two churches

**Our new Parish Priest**

* Will be forward thinking with a real heart for mission.
* Will have an enthusiasm for ‘growing churches’, building missional communities – and nurturing disciples.
* Will encourage and enable lay ministry and vocation
* Will lead creative and innovative worship – alongside existing traditions
* Will be a collaborative person who works easily in a team.
* Will be committed to working ecumenically and is experienced in community engagement – including schools
* Possible areas for future focus

Growing a good and supportive working relationship with other clergy in the Deanery and the Methodist Minister at St Andrew’s, Hardwick.

Working with the Elim Pentecostal Hope Church.

To work with the PCC towards the growth and development of the parish so that it is sustainable, and effective in mission, especially in the Hardwick area.

To ensure that a high standard of worship, preaching, pastoral care and nurture is provided so that people are more able to live as disciples of Christ.

To collaborate within the deanery in mission and ministry following the Stockton Deanery Plan.

The successful person will need to be a good listener and team player, working with the Lay Ministers of Christchurch. They should be outward looking, energetic and enthusiastic about engaging with the wider community. Able to recognize the potential for partnerships, relationships, collaborations etc. They should have the courage to face the challenge of developing opportunities for mission within our church and be involved with all aspects of our parish life.

**More about Stockton**

Stockton-On-Tees is a pleasant market town situated beside the River Tees in the Tees Valley region of North – East England. It has an exceptionally wide High Street which is mainly pedestrianised where a good selection of stores,6 banks and shopping precinct including a Post Office in W. H. Smith can be found. The old Castlegate centre was demolished, to allow one shopping precinct, in addition to the High Street. Stockton is noted locally for its night life, with a the recently opened Globe Theatre, ARC arts centre (which includes a cinema and performance areas), restaurants, and music pubs and the usual selection of ‘fast’ and ethnic food outlets. The Hampton by Hilton Hotel has proved very successful. Like many other smaller towns, the centre was modernised in the 1960s and it is only now that some of the depredations of the town planners are being reversed. The 1960s shopping area has been demolished, a new NHS Diagnostic centre is being built, and a Riverside Park.

Stockton is centrally located in the Tees Valley area and has excellent road and rail connections, with Teesside airport being located about 6 miles outside the town. There is good ‘out of town’ shopping and entertainment centres and the neighbouring larger towns of Middlesbrough and Darlington also have good facilities.

The river frontage, once the scene of trade and shipbuilding has been extensively redeveloped and the south bank is now the new financial and service industry centre for the town. The Tees Barrage, a couple of miles downstream, is the location of a world-class white-water rapids course and the river itself has been developed for a variety of water sports. The University Hospital of North Tees is situated on Hardwick Estate and serves the areas of Stockton and Hartlepool.

**Some key Statistics relating to the parish**

The parish population is 20,067. Over 95% of the population are ethnically white British.

In the Index of Multiple Deprivation it ranks 287 out 12,178 parishes, where 1 is the most deprived. This makes Christchurch one of the most deprived parishes in the country, using the varies indicators the IMD ranking employs.

Some elements of his include:

Child Poverty 34%

Pensioner poverty 33%

Working age poverty 29%

People with no qualifications 27%

Lone parenthood 14%

Social housing 36%

People living alone 30.5%

**The Team**

**Licensed lay ministers/funeral ministers:** Samantha Wood and Lana Green

**Baptism Preparation:** Samantha Wood, Colin Moore, Linda Ross, Jenny Hodgson

**Taking Communion to the Housebound:** Lana Green, Sam Wood, Linda Ross

**Chalice Assistants:** There are currently 6 lay people who administer the chalice

**Intercessors:** 8 people prepare and deliver intercessions each Sunday

We have recently re-established our Baptism Preparation sessions where families are offered advice and support throughout the process. Currently Baptisms services are held within the Sunday morning 11am Eucharist at St Chad’s. Baptism families are sent invitations to special events such as the Mothering Sunday service.

The PCC wishes all orders of ministry to be open equally to all, without reference to gender.

**The PCC consists of –** *(following APCM April 2024)*

**Chair:** Incumbent *(Vacant))*

**Lay Chair:** Linda Ross

**Church Wardens:** Linda Ross, Colin Moore

**Licensed lay ministers/ funeral ministers:** Lana Green, Sam Wood

**Secretary:** Jenny Hodgson

**Treasurer:** Sue Fickling (not on PCC)

**Deanery Synod Reps:** Linda Ross, Samantha Wood, Colin Moore

**Other PCC members:** Pauline Johnson, Jayne Reay. Charlotte Bradley

**Parish Safeguarding Officer:** Linda Ross

The PCC meets once a month at present.

Sue Hamilton, who lives near the St. John’s in St. Crispin’s Court, is paid on an hourly basis as a caretaker to open and close for the groups where there is no key holder, and also helps with cleaning the church.

Terry Green acts as verger for funerals.

**Parsonage**



The current parsonage is at 263 Darlington Lane, well positioned between the two churches. It is a four bedroomed detached house with a separate garage, car parking to the front and side, and a large enclosed garden at the back. The back of the building overlooks Newham Grange Park.

Downstairs is the hall, breakfast/dining room, kitchen, cloakroom, large lounge and study/office.

It is decorated throughout in white, and fully carpeted. There is a separate entrance for the office. A new boiler and roof were fitted during the previous incumbency. Since then, solar panels, a new bathroom and kitchen and windows have been fitted.



**Finance and policies**

The finances of the three churches were combined during 2016. We have always paid our Parish share in full, and have increased generously each year, despite our lack of unrestricted reserves. We have also paid any expenses claimed by our incumbents in full.

The end of year financial statement for 2024 is below.

**Income**

Voluntary giving 27,760

Activities for generating funds 16,894

**Total Income**  **46,484**

**Expenditure**

Parish Share 28,110

Church running and staffing costs 25,869

**Total expenditure** **53,979**

Transfer from Trust Fund  6,000

Excess of receipts over payments £ (1,495)

There is also a Trust Fund from the sale of St. James’, in which there is £77,542 capital (restricted for building purposes) and interest of approximately £733 which can be used for Ecclesiastical purposes.

Our Parish Share for 2025 is £28,198 as suggested in the Guided Pledge proposed by the Diocesan Board of Finance.

We expect to receive in the region of £5,000 in Gift Aid from HMRC for the year 2024 in the coming months.

**Personnel**

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**APPENDIX: COMMENTS FROM CHILDREN**

**AND FINALLY**… Some thoughts and hopes from our young people at St John the Baptist CE Primary School…

**What we would like a vicar to be:**

**Year 2**

* Special person wearing a cape with a bit of gold on
* tell us about Jesus and God,
* someone who likes children,
* good at telling stories
* friendly and kind
* trusted

**Year 3**

* Fun/funny to engage younger children
* Be kind
* Have a joyful and happy manner
* Make the ceremonies exciting
* Be approachable so people would like to talk to them

**Year 4**

* Approachable
* Kind and respectful
* A clear, confident speaker
* Courageous
* Friendly to all

**Year 5**

* Kind to everyone and welcome them into church, smiling and friendly
* Confident in their faith
* Take their duties seriously
* Able to take care of the church valuables
* Someone that people can talk to or be open with
* Courageous

**Year 6:**

* Interactive, entertaining, and fun activities, e.g., crafts, bracelet making, dress up and act out stories
* Welcoming, nice, enthusiastic, kind with a good sense of humour
* Provide the religious message in a fun way, e.g., unique way of telling stories and entertaining songs
* Make things educational but also entertaining

**Year 7:**

* Read stories to us and someone we can talk to
* Someone with a good sense of humour
* Approachable, friendly, patient, respectful
* Willing to come into school and teach us in classes

**Class 8 – Y5/6**

* Respectful, resilient, forgiving,
* Helpful and friendly
* A good singer (start a choir?)
* Clever and confident
* Tell good stories
* Be loving and kind to others
* Someone courageous