

Parish Profile

Kingsthorpe Team ministry

St John the Baptist, St Mark's, and St David's



We are looking for a half time team vicar!

We are a parish on the outskirts of Northampton made up of three churches - St John the Baptist (SJB), St Mark's, and St David's. POP 27000+ due to new build.

ER 175, USA 79 (post pandemic) Before the pandemic 125 between 3 churches - SJB 50, St David's 40, St Mark's 35.

This is a eucharistic community, wanting to go forward and grow as a parish. We work very much as a team, and many things are done across the parish. The pandemic strengthened our team approach and brought all three congregations together. During the pandemic we developed several digital meetings using zoom on a regular basis - daily prayer, Compline, Spiritual Communion. As we have moved forward we have continued with daily prayer on zoom whilst restarting other services in person. Holy communion is now given in both kinds in all of our churches, giving the parishioners a choice as to whether to receive the chalice.

A virtual coffee on zoom was very popular and people from all three churches took part and have got to know each other better as a result. There were also some virtual social activities. House groups, youth group and bible study continued on zoom during the pandemic, and now meet in person as well as continuing online as appropriate. We are keen to continue this parish approach and take advantage of the bonds build during the lockdown times.



We have a thriving MU which again consists of members from each church across the parish.

We go into a number of schools twice a term, both lay and clergy led. We normally take assemblies twice a term, as well having some classroom time and from time to time offer visits to the church buildings where we offer the experience modules. This has been very popular.



Figure 1 St John the Baptist Church

St John the Baptist is in the centre of the village area of Kingsthorpe. It is a traditional church with a middle to high tradition. It has a choir connected to the RSCM.

At the moment there is one Sunday service at 10am. It is Eucharistic, with robes. The numbers are going up, now to 34 whereas before the pandemic it was between 50 -60 on a normal Sunday. There is also Holy Communion service on Thursday morning.

We hope to restart children's work within the Sunday service as we had a number of families who attended prior to the pandemic and hope that more will join us from Brick church and Little Stars

It is congregation made up of various ages including some families with children, however it has a larger number of older people. As in all the churches, the main need is mission, and growth in depth of faith. This brings opportunity. This will mean more new work in groups that people can go to such as bible studies, or social groups with some form of faith input that they and their friends can be invited to.

There is a core of people at St John the Baptist who want to take it forward. When we do have different activities, especially to raise money the congregation is very supportive.

The chapter house is a building linked to the church and we are in the process of expanding it. This is a major piece of work but when it is completed it will mean that we will be able both have more groups for the church and also outside groups which will of course help our finances.

St John the Baptist has quite a large ministry in baptism, wedding, and funerals. We gain people and families from all those areas. There is much work to be done in this respect. There would be an expectation that the new team vicar would take their turn in all of these. With post baptism, wedding, and funeral visits as there is not the capacity to do this with the present staffing situation.

St John the Baptist Church has been heavily involved in a number of community activities which encourages a large number of people into church who normally would not attend a regular service. Each summer the large village fete would see many hundreds of people pass through the doors. Similarly, the annual Christmas Tree festival attracts many people over the course of a weekend. Other activities in recent years have been mums and tots, weekly coffee mornings, Brick church, a pet service and an annual Teddy Bears Picnic. Each of these activities attracts many people from outside of our usual church community. Especially local schools, and uniformed organisations.

In order to develop our mission, we have re started Brick Church, and introduced Little Stars, a group for parents and carers and preschool children. The activities at Little Stars include both faith and play.



Figure 2 St David's Church

St David's church is in the centre of St David's housing estate. This area is ranked in the top 10% of most deprived areas of England and has many of the challenges associated with deprivation.

The community are very loyal to St David's - before the pandemic it had up to 40 people, however at the moment around 17 are returning on a weekly basis. This is expected to grow as the situation improves. It has to be said that a large proportion of the congregation don't live

on the estate.

There is a mixture of people coming to this church including families and children's work continues here. This is a eucharistic community and has a weekly eucharist, robes are worn.

There is a lot of work with the community including a food bank and a café. There is a weekly Mums and Toddlers group, and also Renew 88, a group linked to wellbeing. This meets on a weekly basis and is open to across the parish and community. There is also the bowling club for older people. Fun and Faith, is a youth group linked to all our churches where the young people get together to learn about faith, have fun together and eat!

During the last team vicar's time there was a lot of connection with the community, and this had brought much fruit, in a larger congregation and the start of a children's choir. Other

groups use the church buildings each evening. Kids link is a youth group organised by the community and the police which meets every Wednesday evening
St. David's are very good at organising social activities for both church and the community.

The potential to do more work on the estate is immense, expanding the use of church buildings in the day for groups working with in the community. These groups would be determined by the community.

St Mark's church can be found on the Whitehills Estate. It is a modern building, and it has about 35 USA. It has a low /evangelical churchmanship. It has a 10am Holy Communion service on a Sunday.

The congregation ranges from children up to the elderly. Some of St Mark's congregation take part in team activities, leading them in some cases, this includes Little Stars. St Mark's has a very active prayer triplet system which works well with all members.



Figure 3 St Mark's Church

There is a great deal of potential for mission on the estates around the St Mark's area however the congregation have not had the confidence to do this themselves and there has been a reliance on the clergy as there has been at St John the Baptist also.

St Mark's has a large hall which has a huge potential for different meetings, groups and activities. It is already used by several groups which give a steady income. In the past there was a large mums and tots group which was very successful but sadly when the leader left there was no-one able to take over. Requests have been made for something similar to recommence. There is a men's group, led by one of the curates, as well as a lunch time opportunity for those working at home to have a break and a light lunch. During the last year a very good contact has been built up with the local school and led to a number of visits from various year groups to the church building.

In conclusion

This is an exciting Parish to work in. Most of the three congregations are happy to be led and to go to certain groups that are put on for them, but many need encouragement to lead and develop church and mission activities. The parish as a whole had a strong volunteering ethos in the past but many now feel unable to give as much as they did when they were younger. As a parish we have incorporated the principles of Leading your church into

growth (LYCIG) enthusiastically and St David's are being encouraged like all the rest of the team to be as involved as possible. It is hoped that with this positive approach as a parish, we will see growth and development of our churches and the community around us.

I have a lay team consisting of 2 curates, 1 lay reader, 2 Lay pastoral ministers, 1 evangelist.

Kingsthorpe Team Ministry is a busy parish with much potential unrealised. We would welcome a half time priest came to work in achieving more across the parish.



Figure 4 St David's House, Eastern Avenue