



Stained glass in the Church portrays apostles and prophets



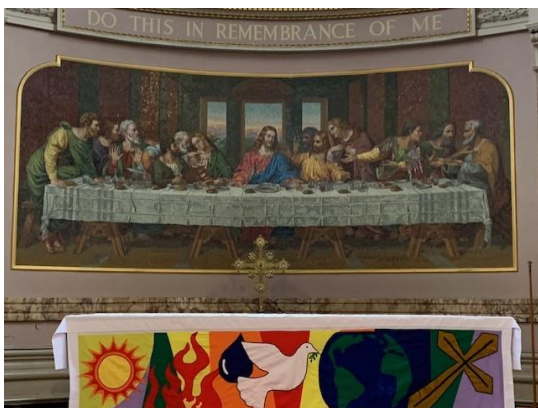
Annually serviced, the organ is occasionally used in services



The magnificent marble pulpit is not generally used these days



Installation of a new screen and high-powered projector took place in summer of 2024



The Salviati glass mosaic behind the altar

Fundraising via table sales held every couple of months



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Our Vision

Welcome!

We're delighted that you are taking the time to find out about us, as you consider your next ministry role.

The Diocese of Liverpool is asking God for a bigger church to make a bigger difference, with more people knowing Jesus and more justice in the world; this is a perfect fit for our own ethos, which wants to develop more ways of reaching out into the community through prayer and action in order to foster God's transformational work in this area – of the place itself, but mostly of the people who live and work here.

We believe that God has called us to:

- **Expand** his kingdom in Wavertree



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- **Develop** relationships with our living God within our congregation and in the community
- **Live** and **work** according to his will for this place and this church
- **Interact** with other local leaders and agencies to the benefit of the area
- **Develop** opportunities for mission and outreach
- **Activate** change and improvement in this place and
- **Equip** our people to transform our community with the love of Jesus Christ.

Our New Vicar

We believe our new minister will be someone who shares our vision by encouraging and engaging us in the work of God. Our vicar will be a leader who inspires others, who recognizes the talents and skills gifted by God to each member, and who seeks to interact with the whole church in achieving God's will for Wavertree.

- Secure in their faith and dependent on God's word in Holy Scripture
- Strong in relationship with the Lord and constantly seeking to grow in that relationship
- One who seeks the power of the Holy Spirit in ministering to God's people
- One who has an active and powerful prayer life

Someone who possesses a number of the following qualities:

Good Preacher and Leader

- A scriptural, Spirit-filled person
- An evangelizer and discipler
- An inspirational communicator with a sense of humour
- Good stewardship and teaching

Effective Facilitator and Mentor

- Able to discern and grow talents within the congregation
- Supportive and encouraging
- A great team player

Strategist

- Forward thinking
- Understanding of church growth
- Can facilitate missional outreach and growth

God's Representative to Community

- Appreciative of the needs of the area
- Able to develop outreach and support for the community, in collaboration with both congregation and community
- A willing 'champion' of local people and agencies

Enabling Pastoral Leader

- Demonstrate authentic care for people in our congregation
- Able to develop rapport and understanding of and for congregation
- A loving presence in the church community
- Approachable and wise



Our Congregation and PCC

Congregation

The congregation is distinguished by a high number of Spirit-filled members who participate fervently in worship. Services are broadly liturgical and are infused with creative elements that enhance our spiritual experiences.

In recent years, the church has seen eleven individuals answer the call to ordained ministry. Additionally, many members have participated in the Directions course or other training programmes offered by the Diocese, reflecting a strong commitment to spiritual growth and leadership development.

Currently, the congregation consists primarily of older members, with an increasing number of younger families, creating a diverse age demographic.



This congregation is known for its welcoming and loving nature, striving to embody and reflect God's love through its ministry. However, the engagement with the broader community is presently limited and recognized as an area needing growth and enhancement.

We have achieved membership of the Evangelical Alliance,

PCC

The PCC is active and enthusiastic. It meets on the second Monday of each month and the APCM normally takes place after a Sunday service.

The PCC has recently agreed to:

- Utilise funds from the sale of the old school building to support mission and outreach and improve church facilities
- Apply for faculties to carry out these improvements
- Focus on healing ministry, outreach to the elderly and the young
- Increase financial solvency and establish rigorous and stable stewardship to future-proof the church

The PCC has a vision of the church as Kingdom People, seeking to grow the church and make new Christians and aims to continue to use the building as a facility for community events.

Our Worship

The main service is held every Sunday at 10:45 AM, alternating between Morning Prayer and Holy Communion. Members of the congregation actively participate by reading during services, and a growing group leads in intercessory prayers. The tradition of congregational involvement in service delivery, championed by the last incumbent, continues robustly.

Music plays a vital role in the church's character. A dedicated ensemble of singers and guitarists offers both traditional and contemporary hymns.

The church annually celebrates Ghanaian Independence with a special service, and provides dynamic baptismal services alongside deeply spiritual and personalized funeral services.

We hold a Healing Service on any month with a fifth Sunday; this includes the laying-on of hands.

Occasional services are crafted to engage the congregation in deep worship; they include Harvest, Remembrance and Memorial services and Christmas and Easter events.



Our Work

Pastoral

Home visits and phone calls to ill congregation members are a crucial aspect of church life, ensuring that those in need are not left isolated. Additionally, a church WhatsApp group facilitates ongoing prayer and communication amongst members, reinforcing the community bond. We are planning to initiate a 'Buddy' scheme aimed at fostering mutually supportive networks.

Under the aegis of the last incumbent, a team of our Church leaders completed the Leading your Church into Growth training and began to explore new ways into mission.

Community outreach is robust, with the church actively providing food assistance to families and individuals facing hardship. We are supporting a gradually growing number of asylum seekers.

The Evergreens Group serves as a key social platform, blending members of the congregation with the local community. Although relatively small, this group of enthusiastic individuals over 55 years old finds great value in their regular interactions and activities.



The healing ministry is increasingly recognized as essential for both the congregation and the wider community. It is anticipated to grow and become a more significant part of the church's outreach efforts, offering spiritual and emotional support to those in need.

Preaching, Teaching and Learning

Preaching is considered a cornerstone of each service within the church. Currently, preaching is done by the ordained self-supporting minister, with plans to cultivate new preachers from the congregation to broaden and deepen the delivery of sermons.

The Church maintains its commitment to scriptural engagement through weekly evening courses, allowing for continued learning and interaction. In recent times, these have included a Bible Society course on Romans, and a craft-based course developed 'in-house' focussing on spiritual identity.

Additionally, the church has a rich history of fostering spiritual education through various courses. Programmes like the Alpha Course, the Pilgrim Course, and the Bible Course are integral parts of its educational offerings, helping to enrich the community's understanding and practice of faith. These initiatives underscore the church's ongoing dedication to learning and spiritual growth.

Mission and Outreach

In the heart of a vibrant community, a bustling church extends its role beyond spiritual services to become a centre for local engagement.

The church also serves as a cultural hub, in the recent past showcasing local talents through exhibitions of art, photography, and crafts, and hosting concerts that feature a

range of musical genres. These events draw both church members and the wider community, fostering a shared cultural experience. At Christmas and on fine summer days, creative services are held in the Church courtyard.

A key initiative is the Community Food Cupboard, an independent effort providing essential food supplies to those in need. Additionally, the church has been strengthening its ties with local secondary schools, enhancing educational experiences by integrating community resources. We intend to explore potential links with Zero Waste.



For seniors, the "Evergreens" club meets weekly, offering social gatherings, excursions, and special events, while a bi-weekly knitting club until recently engaged craft enthusiasts from both the church and the broader community, promoting friendship and belonging.

Recognizing the importance of community outreach, the Parochial Church Council (PCC) is committed to expanding these efforts, ensuring the church remains a vital, inclusive part of the community. Through its diverse programmes, the church not only supports spiritual growth but also enriches the communal fabric. It has recently experimented with first an Asylum Seekers Cafe and then a community cafe. Though neither was well attended, they reflect an ongoing commitment to meeting the needs of the local community. We are in the first stages of planning a monthly film night aimed at attracting students and families as well as showing Christian films. This will utilise the new projector which was installed mid-2024.



Our Opportunities and Essentials

Opportunities

St. Bridget's Church, located in the Picton Council area of Liverpool, is actively pursuing several vital initiatives to enhance its community presence and spiritual outreach. Recognizing the diverse needs of its parishioners and the broader community, the church is focused on re-establishing its ministry to cater effectively to the elderly, families, and students, aiming to address their unique spiritual and communal needs. To this end, it is close to achieving a Faculty for expanding and renewing the kitchen facilities.

In terms of broader community engagement, St. Bridget's is developing targeted outreach programmes. These initiatives are designed to overcome various challenges such as linguistic barriers, an ageing population, widespread loneliness, and persistent poverty. The church's efforts are tailored to create a supportive environment that embraces all community members, fostering a sense of belonging and support.

The transient nature of part of the population, including students and refugees, poses unique challenges. St. Bridget's is committed to adapting its ministries to serve these dynamic groups, ensuring they find a welcoming spiritual home during their time in Liverpool. The Church welcomes an increasing range of peoples from other nations and cultures.

Building rapport with other ethnic groups is a distinct priority, reflecting the church's dedication to inclusivity and multicultural engagement. By establishing strong relationships across different cultures and backgrounds, St. Bridget's aims to enrich its congregation's experience and foster mutual understanding and respect.

Financial stability is also a focus, with initiatives underway to increase the church's income through innovative fundraising and stewardship strategies. This financial growth is essential for sustaining and expanding church activities and outreach programs.

Lastly, the church is dedicated to growing its congregation. By nurturing a welcoming, vibrant, and inclusive community, St. Bridget's Church hopes to attract and retain a diverse group of worshippers, united in their faith and commitment to community service. Through these efforts, St. Bridget's seeks to deepen its impact in the Picton area and beyond,



building a strong, supportive community centred around faith and fellowship. Over the period since Covid, the Church has more than doubled its attendance, with on average 55 – 60 people attending Sunday services.

Essentials

St. Bridget's Church is deeply committed to enhancing its spiritual and community offerings through a variety of focused initiatives. Central to its mission is the commitment to a robust Healing Ministry, providing spiritual support and comfort to those in need, affirming the church's role as a sanctuary for healing and hope.

Additionally, the church has embraced the "Leading Your Church into Growth" course, which is instrumental in guiding its strategies for expansion and spiritual enrichment. This commitment is part of a broader strategy to nurture discipleship among its members, fostering a deeper understanding and practice of their faith.

Leadership at St. Bridget's is characterized by Trinitarian preaching, reflecting a theological commitment that underscores the church's teachings and activities. This approach ensures that the congregation receives a holistic spiritual guidance aligned with foundational Christian doctrine.

St. Bridget's has been actively engaged with the Wavertree Group of Churches, participating in collaborative efforts that enhance the church's outreach and community impact. This cooperation among local churches strengthens their collective mission and broadens the support network for parishioners. It is currently exploring new possibilities through the Diocese's Fit for Mission initiative.

The church maintains a strong focus on growth—not just in numbers, but in the spiritual vitality and community engagement of its congregation. This commitment is underscored by prudent financial stewardship. St. Bridget's is currently up to date with Parish Share payments and possesses substantial reserves, which are earmarked for building improvements and mission-oriented initiatives. Maintaining these financial commitments is paramount to sustaining the church's operations and facilitating its ambitious plans for the future.

Through these diverse commitments, St. Bridget's Church continues to build on its foundational strengths, aiming to enrich the spiritual lives of its members and extend its reach into the community it serves.

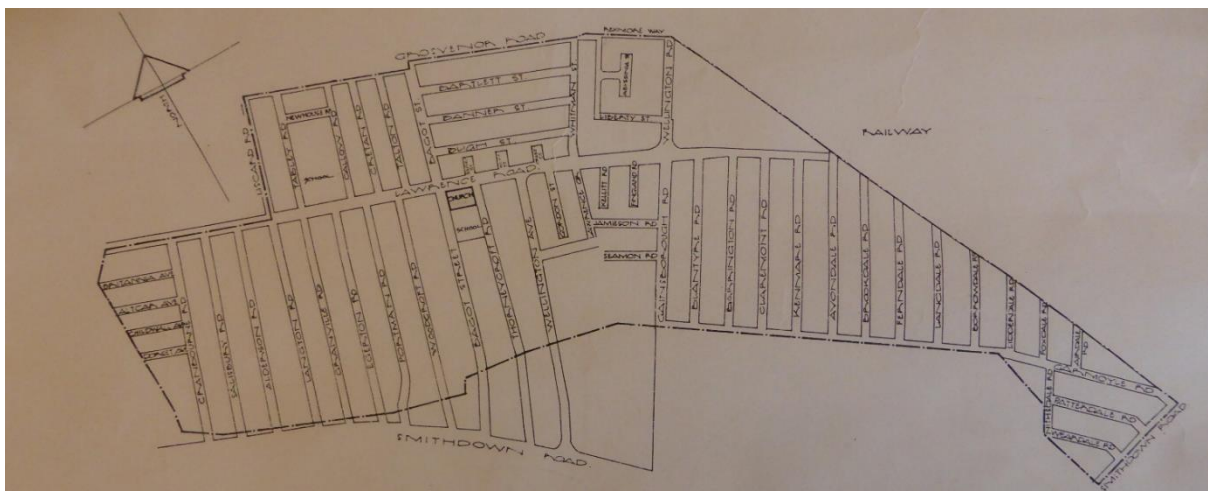
Our Parish

The church is centrally located in one of the parish areas that fall within the 3% most socially deprived in the country. The local population is becoming increasingly diverse, with a substantial portion still being White English, but now also including a growing number of immigrant families, refugees from various countries and ethnicities, and students. This diversity contributes to a dynamic cultural mix, though it also presents challenges in reconciling differing lifestyles and traditions. Isolation amongst the elderly is a prevalent issue here, as is lack of facilities for social interaction at all ages.

Educational attainment in the area varies, with a notably higher percentage of individuals lacking formal qualifications compared to national averages.

The church is flanked by two other places of worship: St. Dunstan's, another Anglican church, and Frontline, a free church. Each congregation exhibits distinct characteristics in their approach to worship; St. Bridget and St. Thomas' is best characterized as 'moderately evangelical' and 'low Anglican', respectively, showcasing a range of practices within the Anglican tradition.

Our parish number is 626.



Christmas dinner for older residents and congregation



Weddings are rare but well-received

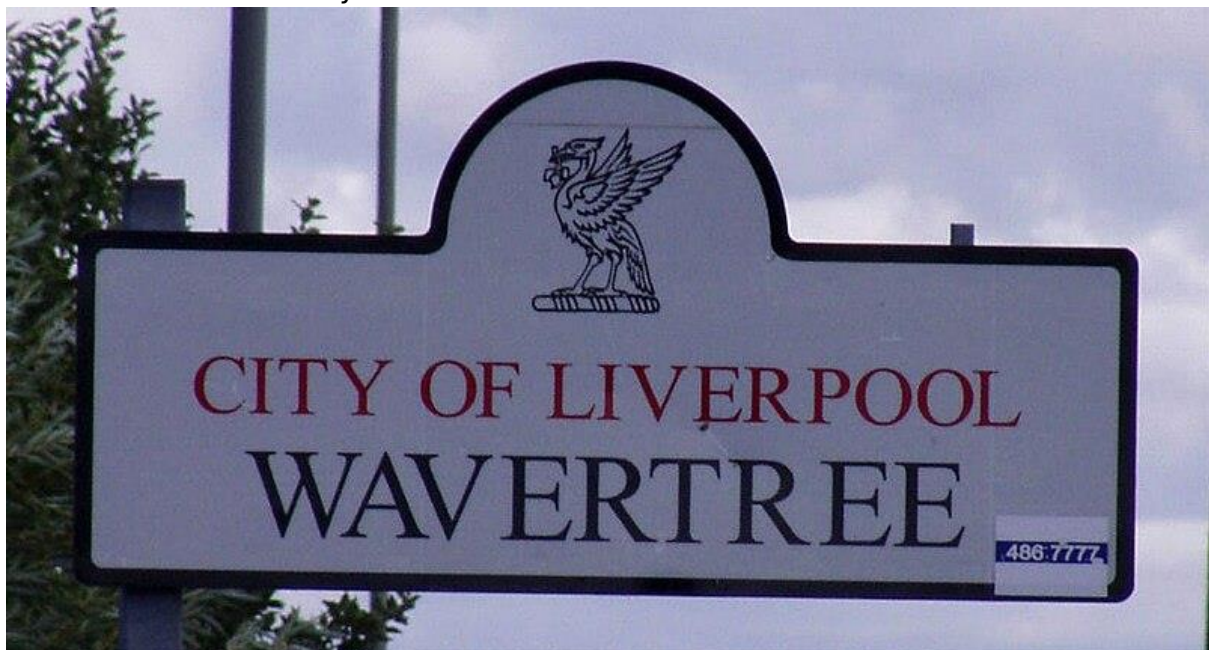
Our Context and Local Facilities

The church has collaborated closely with St. Mary's Church and Holy Trinity, forming a Group ministry that enriched the community's spiritual life through diverse worship experiences and events. This partnership fostered regular group worship and special events such as The People's Passion and our dramatized event, God's Great Adventure. Social gatherings have included an annual picnic and carol singing at a local pub, alongside ceilidhs and games nights, further highlighting the community's shared devotion and varied styles of worship.

This Group ministry has been dedicated to building a united church community that celebrates the diverse ways its members worship and their collective love for the Lord, aiming to strengthen these bonds continually. With the current focus on Fit for Mission, these strong links have weakened; however, new opportunities for interaction within the Deanery, and possibly the new Parish to be formed through FfM, are exciting.

The area around the church is well-equipped with educational facilities, including several primary schools, both secular and church-affiliated, along with three Anglican high schools—separate schools for boys and girls and a comprehensive high school. Additionally, the proximity of two prestigious public schools, a voluntary-aided grammar school, and two community comprehensives enrich the educational landscape.

Outdoor recreational facilities are also readily accessible, with Wavertree Sports Centre and Sefton and Greenbank Parks just a short walk away. Transport links are excellent, with a regular bus service facilitating easy access to the city centre. For shopping and daily needs, a number of supermarkets and shops, including Asda, Aldi, and Co-Op, are located near the church, enhancing the convenience for the church community. The last-but-one incumbent notably served as Chaplain to Asda, further connecting the church with the local community.



Our Community

In the Picton Ward, as detailed by the Council Survey of 2016-2017, the community faces a complex array of social and economic challenges, encapsulated within a population of approximately 18,750 residents. The area ranks among the most deprived in the nation, with 53.8% of its population living within the 10% most impoverished sectors nationally, facing an average income of £19,896. The local socio-economic landscape is marked by a notable crime rate, the 9th highest in Liverpool, with 1,881 crimes recorded during the survey period, including 255 instances of domestic burglary and 220 of violence with injury.

The community's vulnerabilities are further underscored by the 42.3% of children living in poverty and a 5.1% unemployment rate across all age groups. Housing is predominantly managed by social landlords, who account for 34.8% of properties, while private landlords manage 37.6%, and only 25.7% of homes are owner-occupied.

Educational attainment poses another significant challenge, with 28.4% of individuals over the age of 16 having no qualifications, and a distressing statistic of 3,405 people categorized as inactive due to disability or long-term sickness. The area also struggles with housing stability, evidenced by 4.5% of properties standing vacant.



Despite these challenges, 20.9% of residents over 16 hold level 4 qualifications, suggesting a segment of the population that has achieved a higher level of academic success. However, the average life expectancy remains 5% below the national average, reflecting broader health disparities. The demographic profile is diverse, with 40% of the population identifying as ethnicities other than White British, and single-person households constituting 42.9% of the living arrangements.

Picton Ward's community is a tapestry of socio-economic and cultural diversity, facing significant challenges but also displaying pockets of resilience and educational achievement. As it stands, addressing these multifaceted issues requires a committed, holistic approach from both local governance and the community itself.

Our Building

St. Bridget's Church, originally constructed in 1872 as a 'Chapel of Ease' for Holy Trinity, Wavertree, embraced independence around the time of World War I. The architecture of the church is inspired by an Italian basilica, featuring marble-robed pillars and flooring, a coffered ceiling, and a striking Salvati glass mosaic of the Last Supper that adorns the space behind the communion table. The external appearance of the building is modest, perhaps intentionally to enhance the stunning impact of its architecturally significant interior.

In 1996, a significant development saw St. Bridget's unite in a benefice with the former St. Thomas'. Since then, the church has undergone various modifications to enhance its functionality, including the removal of some pews, and the addition of a kitchen, toilets, and carpeting, though these features now require updating.

The church expanded its premises in the late 1990s by acquiring the adjoining former primary school, which served dual roles as a church hall and community centre until maintenance costs became prohibitive.



Significant restoration work was completed on the church roof and rain goods in 2016, supported by a government grant. The gardens around the church have been beautifully landscaped, and there is a paved yard at the rear. The former choir vestry has been transformed into the church office, signalling a commitment to ongoing organisational needs.

Looking towards the future, the church recognizes that the current facilities do not fully meet the evolving needs of the congregation and community. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) has made decisive moves to improve accessibility and functionality. Plans include improving disabled access, replacing the heavy porch doors with automatic ones, overhauling the toilet facilities, extending and renovating the kitchen, and removing additional pews to accommodate wheelchair users. Moreover, there is an initiative to construct a new breakout space within the Church to facilitate children's work and meetings. We are expanding our use of the Church courtyard to offer social gatherings, table sales, barbecues and occasional services.

Faculty applications for these proposed enhancements are in process, with efforts to secure necessary grants underway. An individual has been appointed specifically to assist with these efforts, highlighting the church's proactive approach to building a more inclusive and functional environment for all who come to St. Bridget's.

Our Vicarage

The present vicarage is located in Ashfield, close to where St. Thomas' Church once stood. It is a 1960s semi-detached brick-built house with gardens to front and rear.

In recent times, the Diocese has rented out the vicarage rather than have it stand empty.



