

St Bede with St Clement, Toxteth



Parish Profile 2023



Our Vision

Worshipping, welcoming and working together: with God, with our community, with each other

Who we are

- We are a friendly, welcoming congregation, that has seen many changes in recent years.
- We are well established in the heart of our community, but as that community continues to change, we are aware that we need to change too.
- We have two lay readers, and two Sunday school coordinators



Who we are looking for

- A person, who can support and encourage the existing congregation on their journeys in faith.
- Someone who can relate to a diverse congregation with a high proportion of African and Afro-Caribbean members and build on this.
- Someone who can understand the socio-economic needs of the congregation and parish.
- A person who can bring about change which takes the congregation with them.
- Someone who will help us to grow in numbers and as disciples of Christ.

What we are hoping to be

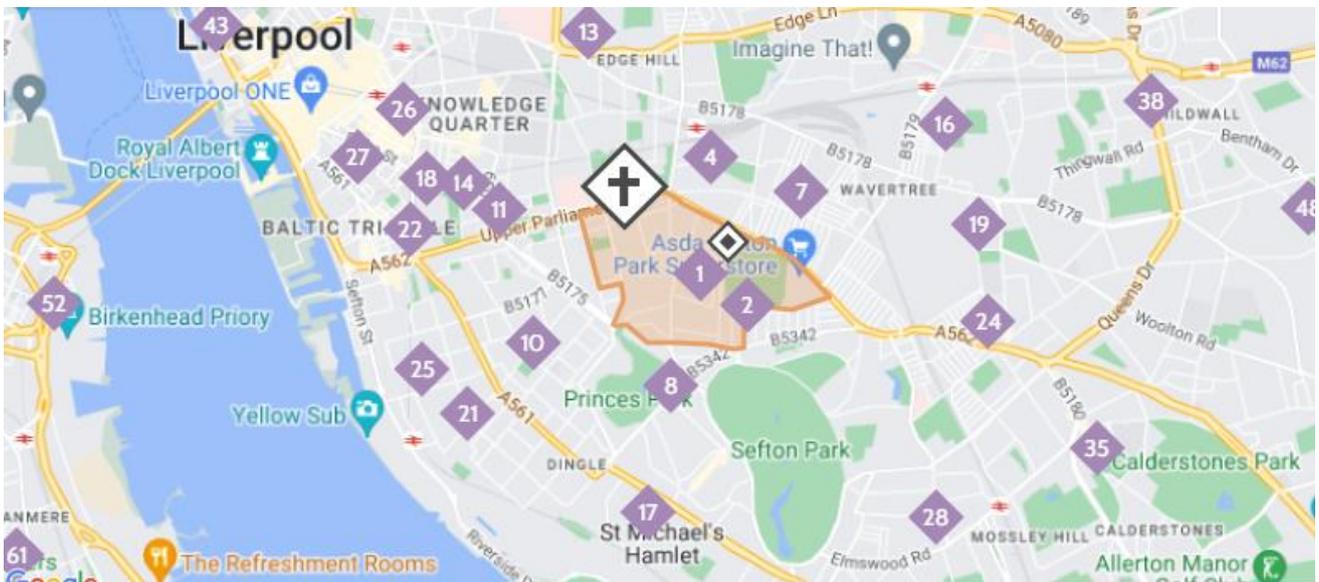
- A church that is a safe inclusive place that embraces each and every person, including people who find social situations challenging, for example those who are autistic or suffer from mental illness.
- A congregation that is growing in faith as well as numbers.
- A church that is aware of local activities as well as building links with churches and other faith groups in the area and in the deanery.

What we can offer

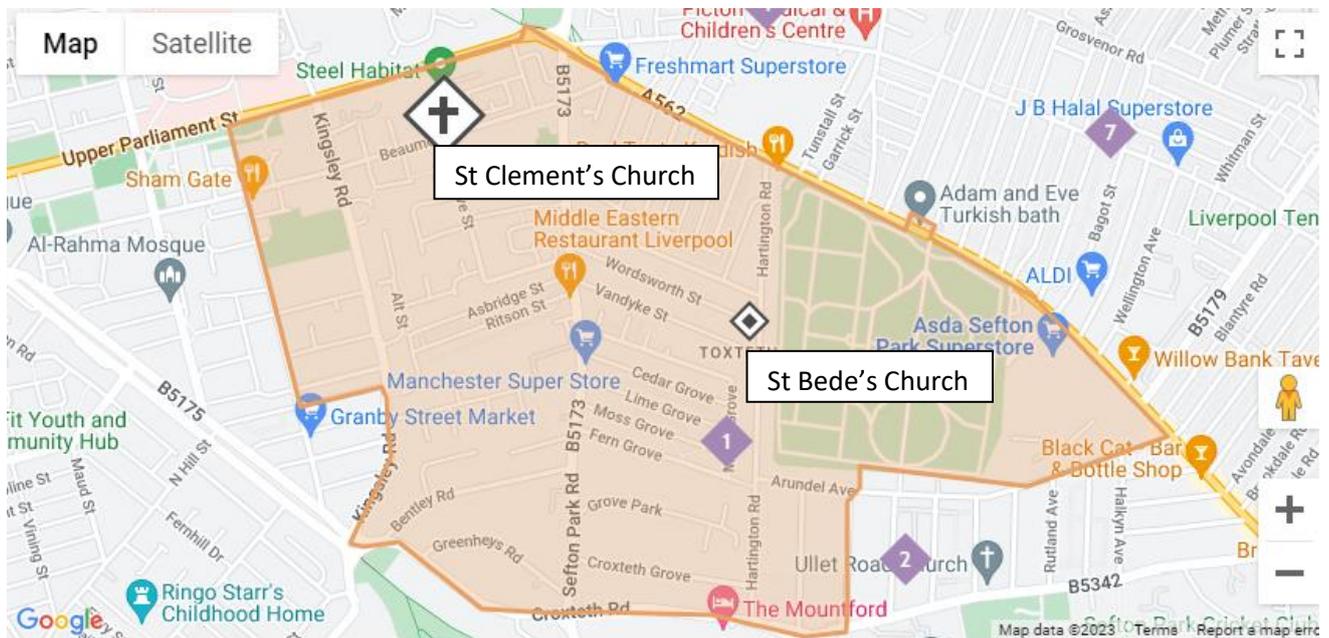
- We are open to accepting change in the presentation of the services, done in a sensitive manner, which acknowledges the varied membership.
- A small leadership team which dedicated to serving and is encouraging our wider membership to become more involved in church affairs.
- We are a welcoming church; all the clergy who have visited us have commented on our lovely atmosphere and friendly, warm welcome
- A realistic half time post and a congregation who will respect your boundaries around this.

1. The Church & Parish

The parish's position in Liverpool



The parish in more detail. The church positions are shown by the black diamonds



1.1 The community

The parish of St Bede with St Clement was formally constituted in July 2012, after several years of increasingly close cooperation between the two congregations, the incumbent of St Clement being priest in charge of St Bede's from the mid 90's. The new combined parish is close to the city centre with good bus links. The parish is bordered by two extensive parks combining open space, woodland, and lakes. Sefton park hosts various large events through the year, including Music Festivals representing the culture of the area, food and Drink Festivals and firework displays. Africa Oye is an annual parade and concert celebrating the African and Caribbean heritage of Liverpool, and is held either in Sefton Park or in the neighbouring Princes Park.

Accommodation in the area comprises a mix of Victorian terraced housing, many split into flats and some nursing homes. There are new-build homes, many owned and well maintained by a number of housing cooperatives and one or two large housing associations, with some owner-occupation. The current population is approximately 8,500. Unemployment is significant, and most of the area falls in the top 1% Index of Multiple Deprivation. Nevertheless, it remains a vibrant and active community, with a long tradition of ethnic and cultural diversity. This includes a long-established population of mainly Caribbean origin, with newer arrivals particularly from Yemen and Somalia now forming a major presence in the area. The parish is bisected by a busy and vibrant shopping area, Lodge Lane, with a large number of Arab and Somali businesses, including several cafés, fast food takeaways and restaurants and an award-winning greengrocer and supermarket, which reflects the diverse ethnic mix of the area.

1.2 Schools and other institutions

There are two primary schools in the parish, Kingsley community school, which has a multicultural mix of pupils and a strong community ethos, and Princes Primary School, which caters for children aged 4-11 with severe learning difficulties. St Hilda's (mixed) and Archbishop Blanch (girls with mixed 6th form) are well-regarded Church of England secondary schools in adjacent parishes and within easy walking distance.

There are also several care homes for older people, and some sheltered accommodation, including a brain injury rehabilitation unit and a complex serving the deaf community.

The Granby Toxteth Development Trust, a charity, runs a variety of projects to support people in the area and uses both our church buildings for its outreach.

Lodge Lane Credit Union, situated in Lodge Lane, was started by the then Anglican vicar of St Bede's and a Roman Catholic priest 25 years ago.

There is a local health centre, just off Lodge Lane.

St Bede



St Clement



1.3 The Churches

1.4 Who we are

Our average congregation on a Sunday is 25-30 and the electoral roll currently stands at 51. The recent pandemic has had an effect on our membership depleting our numbers, for various reasons by ten. The parishioners are quite diverse in terms of age, ethnicity and economic circumstances, and this very much contributes to the character of the congregation. The congregation includes a core of members with a long-standing commitment to the area, though many have moved to other parts of Liverpool for a variety of reasons.

In addition, we have recently been joined by a number of new people, particularly younger African families, and individuals, who have responded to our style of services. This is obviously a welcome development, but it also poses some challenges in blending these groups and meeting different needs.



Our church is in the low church tradition, and we aim to be an open safe and welcoming place to all. Our Mission is to offer worship which meets the needs of the congregation and encourages a growth in faith, a warm and friendly welcome to all and working together, with God, in our community. Within these headings, we identified the following areas to focus on:

- Making sure we encompass the whole church family.
- All have the opportunities to learn, pray and share together
- Improving the buildings and encouraging community use.
- Making the community aware of us and our desire to part of them.
- Ensuring children and young people are made welcome.

The pandemic and age has taken a high toll of our Ladies Fellowship group with many unable to attend. We maintain contact with them by telephone and occasional visits.

We have several families with young children, and also children brought to services by grandparents. The children enjoy Sunday School, which takes place at the same time as the sermon and prayers in the main service. Sunday school uses the Roots material.

1.5 Services

We have one service on Sundays, at 11.00 a.m. which rotate between Holy Communion, Morning Prayer and an All Age family service. Services on the first Sunday of the month take place at St Bede's. The PCC has reluctantly decided to cease the Worship at St. Bede's. This is because the congregation numbers decrease significantly when we meet at St. Bede's. A survey of the congregation showed that the majority favoured St Clements as a place of worship. St. Bede's church has, in many ways better facilities, but St. Clements attracts better attendance, and more occasional visitors.

We have two lay minsters (Readers), and we have a small number of people who regularly read lessons or pray. We have recently updated our PA system at St. Clements and aim to enhance our worship the use of videos and a variety of modern music etc. We are fortunate to have an organist who has given many years of loyal service but recognises the need to present modern music which does not sit comfortably with the organ. A significant number of the congregation love the more traditional hymns but are also open to more modern songs and hymns.

1.6 Children and Families

There is a desire to make families with children feel welcome, both by including them in church services, and by offering activities to children in a Sunday school, although numbers do fluctuate and the age range is wide. This offers a challenge to the leaders, and there is a need to continue to review how best to integrate families with young children into the morning services. The children enjoy Sunday school, but at present don't seem to enjoy all-age services as much. We are working to try to improve this.



1.7 Occasional Offices

We have a small number of baptisms and occasional weddings. During the Interregnum funerals have become fewer.

1.8 Mission Links



We have links with the Free and Anglican Church in Angola which was founded by a former member of St. Clement, Archie Patterson.

He set up churches in many villages and when he was deported by the Portuguese thousands gathered at the quay side to bid him farewell. Although they were nondenominational some had an affinity with the Anglican church and pursued this interest. The outcome was

the formation of an Anglican Diocese in Angola and its first bishop Andre had been baptised by Patterson, he came to Liverpool in 2019 and paid homage at Patterson's grave in Allerton cemetery.

In recent years our links with missionary societies have been tenuous although we have supported Christian agencies through our harvest and thanksgiving collections.



2. The Church & Community

We have a strong commitment to making generous use of our buildings to serve our local community, and the two church buildings offer different and complementary resources.

St. Clement's

The building has recently been used by MOWLL, a local charity promoting social justice for people with learning disabilities and mental health issues and the Granby Educational Trust for variety of community support initiatives. It is also used for a few hours a week by a range of community groups.

St Bede's

Liverpool Citizen Advocacy project has rented office space in the building for a number of years, and has a strong commitment to the area. In particular, one of its activities, the Agnes Woodford Project, organises a well-attended monthly Neighbourhood Lunch.

They also host a quiz night at regular intervals.

The *Memory Singers* group, supporting families and those suffering from Alzheimer's meets twice a month two of our members provide a welcome, with tea and coffee.

We welcome periodic public meetings, for example a number of local housing associations and co-operatives and provide a meeting place for the local Labour Party committee.

The congregation supports the local Foodbank which is coordinated by a member of the Nigerian Apostolic Church which meets in the building. He is supported by a local resident and assisted by a small group of volunteers, one of which is a PCC member.

3. Our buildings

St Clement's church was built in 1841, and is a Grade 2* listed building. In recent years major work has been done, principally to completely overhaul the roof and tower, modernising the toilets, providing disabled access and altering the entrance from Beaumont Street. The church is unique in having a pulpit in front of the Lord's Table making a statement, the word before the sacraments, which reflected the ecclesiastical tensions at the time it was built. There are also boxed pews which add to its architectural uniqueness. The church incorporates an informal meeting area and kitchen. This is separated from the nave by a glass and wooden screen.

St Bede's church was built in 1883, as a daughter church to St Clements as the neighbourhood was growing, and was rebuilt in the 1920's, following a fire. The entrance space offers separate access to a small office, toilets, the church and hall; the hall has a kitchen. The attached hall was fully refurbished and modernised in 1992. In 2017 A new heating System was installed at accost of £42.7k less grants of £15.7k. The balance was funded by historic reserves.

The buildings offer different facilities, St Bede's with its hall has long provided a community resource, being seen more as a community centre rather than a church, this is despite efforts by successive clergy to grow the membership. St Clements, to a lesser extent hosts a variety of community events.

Both buildings are currently hired to other Christian churches on Sunday, which provides a welcome source of income. St Bede's is used on Sunday morning and afternoon and St Clement's on Sunday afternoon and early evening after the morning service.

The Nigerian Apostolic church have expressed an interest in either buying or leasing St Bede's

The land between St Clements and the vicarage, in Beaumont Street is owned by a St Clements Trust value circ. £50k

The modern purpose-built vicarage, built in 1991, is adjacent to St Clements. It has four bedrooms and good living accommodation, as well as a separate study and downstairs toilet. There is a small walled garden to the rear, and a garage. Previous vicars have found the vicarage a good place to live, with friendly neighbours and a genuine community spirit, and they and their families enjoyed the location in the heart of the parish, as well as being close to the city centre and other amenities.



4. Finance

We are managing to cover our expenses and are able to pay our parish share. We have the smallest Parish Share in the Deanery and there is pressure on us, and other parishes, to voluntarily increase our share. We are ranked the tenth poorest parish in the Diocese and have the highest ranking of the Index of Multiple Deprivation in the deanery.

This must be taken in context. The majority of churches in the Diocese and the deanery are suffering from a fall in income due to aging congregations.

In our case 58% of the giving comes from a membership age group in the 70+ band, we are fortunate in having building hire income in the region of £17k. Without this we would not survive. Our giving reflects the socioeconomics of the membership and the area, those who can give, do.

The last accounts show we had free reserves of £35k, this is a fortunate position to be in but completing the work required by the quinquennial inspection would soon reduce the reserves to an unacceptable level. Divesting ourselves of a building would help and as St Clements is likely to attract grants for major constructional works, being a listed building, St Bede's would seem to be the building to go and we acknowledge this would be painful for those with a long history with the church.



5. Deanery Mission Plan

The Deanery Mission Plan was reviewed in 2012, and has four key areas:

- developing leadership
- engaging with the community
- a vision for spiritual and numerical growth
- a mixed economy church, recognising the cultural diversity of the Deanery and working together to provide a variety of expressions of church and worship.



These areas must remain the focus of our mission.

Our church has for a very long time been diverse in terms of ethnicity. The church is in an ethnically diverse area, and the mix of ethnicities is constantly changing. We have always tried as a church to welcome people as they are and be friendly and welcoming to all. This can be seen when we have coffee after a service, as members of the congregation of different nationalities, ethnicities ages and backgrounds mix freely and many friendships

flourish across these potential barriers. Current ethnicities in the congregation include black British, Afro-Caribbean, African, and white British people

Diversity is something which is important in Fit for Mission. We are one of the most diverse churches in the diocese, something we are very keen to build on. At present the leadership of the church does not reflect our diversity particularly well, which is something we are actively trying to change by encouraging more people to take on leadership roles.



Administration

Church Wardens David Thomas
Dr Paul Strickland

Parochial Church Council

Chairman David Thomas

Secretary Anna Bishop

Treasurer David Roughley FCCA

Members Helen Strickland
Doreen Lewis
Sue Arnold
Eileen Roughley
Jackie Roache
Aminata Bass

Deanery Synod Dr Paul Strickland
Helen Strickland

Lay ministers Dr Paul Strickland
David Roughley (PTO)

Young Church Leaders Helen Strickland
Neil Bishop

Health and Safety Neil Bishop

Safeguarding Neil Bishop

Electoral Roll Officer Doreen Lewis

Organist Dr David Pope

Bankers Barclays Bank plc

Services 11am
1st & 3rd Sunday Holy Communion
2nd & 4th Sunday Service of the word
1st Sunday St Bedes
2nd, 3rd, 4th Sunday St Clements

Independent Examiner Richard Fraser ACA

Architects Robin Wolley B Arch RIBA (St Clements building)
Anthony Grimshaw Associates (St Bedes building)

Charity Registration number 1127447