

PARISH OF CHRIST THE KING



ST COLUMBA'S, WIDEOPEN

 THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
DIOCESE OF NEWCASTLE

 Seeking.
Sharing.
Sending.

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Welcome to the diocese of Newcastle!

Thank you so much for your interest in this role, and I hope you enjoy reading the information contained in this brochure and will find it helpful for your discernment. These are exciting and challenging times in the Diocese of Newcastle. Exciting because we are at an early stage of a new season, challenging because like many dioceses we face conversations about our future and how best we use and deploy our resources. Our Deanery Development work has engaged every parish and benefice in renewed conversations about mission and ministry, and we are in a process of entering a new phase in that work, mapping out our renewed strategy and vision. Our outward facing values of 'seeking, sharing, sending' stem from a commitment to be a Church turning outwards in mission and ministry, and younger and more diverse by: **SEEKING** through being open to God's transforming love; **SHARING** through being generous with God's transforming gifts; **SENDING** through being engaged in God's transforming work in the world. I am looking for clergy who are excited about the opportunities and challenges we face, who are happy to work collaboratively and imaginatively with colleagues, and who can inspire communities to roll up their sleeves and get stuck into God's mission, by affirming, enabling, and encouraging lay and clergy together. As your Bishop, I am committed to your wellbeing and development, and I would love to explore with you whether God may be calling you to this role.



The Rt Revd Dr Helen-Ann Hartley
Bishop of Newcastle

The Diocese of Newcastle is the Church of England's most northerly diocese. This Diocese in the 'land of the Northern Saints' was formed in 1882 and comprises **169** parishes across **2,110** square miles. The Diocese covers the local authorities of Northumberland, Newcastle, North Tyneside and also small parts of County Durham and Cumbria. The **12** deaneries within **2** archdeaconries serve a population of about **831,600** people across a variety of communities ranging from sparse rural to large inner-city areas of deprivation.



ST. COLUMBA'S CHURCH, WIDEOPEN



About us

We are St. Columba's Church, Wideopen, a welcoming and supportive congregation with a desire to see our church flourish for the future. We are committed to serving our local community, to offering faithful worship to God, and to reaching new people with the good news of God's love in Christ. We live that out in all sorts of ways as you'll see below.

We still feel the bruising effects of a difficult past for our congregation, but through those experiences we have been formed into a community that cares for and supports each other. Our commitment to the church we helped to build 42 years ago, and the people who worship and share fellowship within it, is strong and deep. We hope that our new vicar will encourage and inspire us, energising our mission as we begin this next chapter in the life of St Columba's Church.

St Columba's is part of Christ the King Team Ministry. The team is made up of four churches: St Columba's, Wideopen; St Aidan's, Brunton Park; St Matthews, Dinnington; and St Cuthbert's, Brunswick. Each church manages its own day to day affairs and has its own District Church Council (DCC), but collaborates with the others through the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and the clergy team. You would be working in collaboration with Rev'd Gerard Rundell as Team Rector (St Aidan's), and Rev'd Mark Edwards as Team Vicar (St Matthew's and St Cuthbert's), as well as Rev'd Dr Hannah Malcolm as Assistant Curate, and a Children and Families worker who has begun pioneering work at St Columba's. We have established a good working relationship serving the growth of God's Kingdom, and you would be supported as a valued part of the team.

St Columba's church building is 42 years old and in good state of repair. The most recent Quinquennial Inspection was carried out in 2024, with no major works currently needed. The building comprises a worship-space with a beautiful modern-Catholic setting, flexible seating, good heating and an up-to-date AV system; a small, prayerful side chapel; a well-used and flexible hall with full kitchen facilities, separated from the main church by sliding doors; as well as fully accessible toilets, a vestry, a small meeting room, and extensive storage space. We are proud of our Church building which was built when the older buildings of St Columba's and St Chad's were deemed to be beyond repair. Some of the current congregation were involved with the fund raising and planning of the new building!



The Church is situated at the northern end of Newcastle Central Deanery 6 miles from the city centre of Newcastle upon Tyne with its shops, universities, hospitals, and theatres. It is only a short drive to the beaches and countryside of Northumberland and is within easy reach of Newcastle Airport.

The local community of Wideopen and Seaton Burn comprises an old colliery village with council housing, 50s and 60s semi detached housing estates with lots of bungalows and a largely older population. There are also some newer estates which have attracted largely younger families. The community is mostly white British. It is a mix of traditional working-class communities, and somewhat more affluent newer estates. The population is around 11,000. The immediate neighbourhood includes several local businesses and amenities including local shops a library, dentist, doctors, hairdressers, gym, post office, and pub. There are two local primary schools (one of which we have a close connection with), an academy, popular football club, and a park well used by local children. There is also sheltered housing and an assisted living complex, as well as two nature reserves.

We are part of the inclusive church network.

Our next Priest

Our next priest will shape an important chapter in the life of St Columba's. In our prayerful reflection a phrase emerged that encapsulates what we need in our new incumbent: 'Compassionate Leadership.'

- We recognise the need to be energised and directed to grow as a church, and to engage with future generations, working particularly in collaboration with our Children and Families worker.
- We want an incumbent who can nurture, guide, hold and lead a congregation into a new future.
- We recognise the real need for good pastoral care, but don't expect the incumbent to do it single-handedly.
- We need compassionate leadership to enable the potential at St Columba's to be nurtured into life.



Worship

Our current worship is best described as Modern Catholic. Worship is eucharistic and liturgical, but we are ready to experiment and welcome new ideas. Vestments are Alb, Stole and Chasuble. We have a team of altar servers as well as an intercession and readers team, and a sacristan who looks after things behind the scenes. We also have an authorised lay worship leader who would be ready to exercise that ministry more if desired.



Our usual pattern of worship is:

Sunday:

- 8.00am: Holy Communion, Common Worship said service with a short reflection. This is held in the chapel, currently once a month, with a congregation of 6-7.
- 10.00am: Parish Eucharist, Common Worship with sermon and hymns. The congregation is approximately 25-30, followed by refreshments for which most people stay.
- 4pm, monthly: Twilight Church, an informal activity-based worship for children and families, supported by a team of volunteers and led by our Children and Families worker. This is a recent addition to our worship. At the time of writing this profile we have held 5 sessions, but it has already attracted a group of approximately 5-6 families coming regularly and is growing each month.



Wednesdays:

- 9.30am: Holy Communion, Common Worship said service with a short reflection. This is held in the chapel with a congregation of 6-7, and is followed by refreshments.

The church has a full AV system with screens and integrated camera for live streaming.

Sunday services are displayed on the screen via PowerPoint and are streamed on Facebook and You Tube. Hymnbooks are available for those who prefer.

Music is mostly played by CD. We have a working pipe-organ and for special services we try to arrange an organist.

Our current Electoral Roll is 63

Average Sunday communicants: 29

Twilight Church average attendance: 10 adults, 10 children

Wednesday communicants: 7

Home communion is taken out by Lay people once a month to an average of 4 people.

Occasional offices during the year

- Baptisms: 7
- Funerals in Church: 8
- Funerals at Crematorium: 5

Church Life

At St Columba's we want our life to reach beyond just our Sunday worship. We try to reach our local community and to meet together in fellowship. We can't do as much as we used to but we're still committed to doing what we can. Our recent Ruby Anniversary year was filled with events! Here's some of what's on at St Columba's:

- A weekly 'Warm Hub' in the church hall during the colder months. We offer companionship, activities and refreshments, and it is well attended by the wider community.
- A team that goes into the local school to deliver 'Open the Book' sessions. We also support visits from the school to the church which have had very good feedback.
- An active Mothers Union branch that meets once a month and whose members are actively involved in the life of the church.



- A well established Toddler Group supported by the church that meets once a week during term time and from which we get Baptism requests.
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- A long established association with our local Air Cadets 861 Squadron who join us for worship on the first Sunday in February for ATC Sunday and then again for Remembrance Sunday. Following the service they process to Seaton Burn War Memorial for the act of Remembrance led by the incumbent.



- Regular fundraising and social events: Summer and Christmas fairs, coffee mornings, strawberry teas, pie and peas quiz nights, concerts, a Christmas tree festival with input from
- local businesses and groups, and more, all of which help engage with the local community.
- There is a community space at the rear of the church with seating where people can sit and reflect. This was set up during Covid.



With the wider Christ the King Team, we join for events such as our Lent Course, Lent Lunches, Advent reflections, Team Evensong and occasional away-days.



The church and hall are hired once a month for worship by North East United in Christ Fellowship, a Tamil-speaking group with members coming from around the North East. Their services take place on a Saturday evening with additional services at Easter, Christmas and New Year. This is a long standing arrangement and some members of the group attend our Sunday services every week.

A local W. I. group meets once a month in the church hall.

Vicarage

The vicarage is a detached house in its own grounds and is adjacent to the church. It has a large back garden with a good size car park at the front with an electric car charging point and large garage. The house comprises 4 bedrooms, family bathroom, kitchen with utility room, dining room, large lounge, study and a downstairs toilet.



Finances

St Columba's is currently reviewing its financial position. At the moment we are running a deficit supported by a generous legacy. Our finance team, in collaboration with the Rector have put forward a proposal for a balanced budget from 2026 onward and we are confident that we can enable this to happen with a mixture of cutting costs and encouraging generosity and good use of our resources. Our annual finances are shown below.

Additional information

As we hope you can see, St Columba's is a church that is deeply loved by its members, and that we think has much to offer. There is great potential here waiting to be nurtured into life. We want the church to survive and to flourish for future generations and are ready to adjust to the challenges and opportunities of working alongside a new incumbent seeking to enable growth. We hope that you will be the person to offer us the compassionate leadership we need to follow God's call for our future.

Appendix: 2024 Accounts Summary

Receipts and Payments from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024

2023 £		Unrestricted Funds		Restricted	TOTAL
		General Fund 2024 £	Designated 2024 £	Funds 2024 £	2024 £
	<u>Receipts</u>				
20,772	Planned giving and service collections	21,768.46			21,768.46
990	Donations and grants	1,371.52	-		1,371.52
4,900	Gift aid recovered	5,599.73			5,599.73
500	Legacies	400.00			400.00
5,067	Fundraising	4,246.49	-		4,246.49
9,745	Other receipts	8,848.88			8,848.88
41,974	Total receipts	42,235.08	- -		42,235.08
	<u>Payments</u>				
30,000.00	Parish share	30,000.00			30,000.00
0.00	Mission giving and donations	50.00			50.00
13,754.00	Church activities, expenses and other payments	16,997.80	600.00		17,597.80
6,313.00	Major capital expenditure	635.24	- -		635.24
50,067	Total payments	47,683.04	600.00	-	48,283.04
-8,093	Excess of Receipts over Payments	5,447.96	600.00	-	6,047.96
0	Transfers between funds	-	- -		-
-8,093	Net Receipts/(Payments)	5,447.96	600.00	-	6,047.96
77,396	Balance b/f at 1 January	55,258.00	10,835.00	3,210.00	69,303.00
69,303	Balance c/f 31 December	49,810.04	10,235.00	3,210.00	63,255.04

In addition to the income recorded above, £1,049 was received in special collections and services and paid over to other charities and missions. This sum is excluded from the accounts in accordance with Church of England guidance.

**Balances at
31 December 2024**

31 December 2023 £		2024 £
	Assets	
58,762	Bank Balance	52,713.72
9,541	CCLA	9,541.19
1,000	Shared interest account	1,000.00
0	Petty Cash	0.00
<u>69,303</u>		<u>63,254.91</u>
	Funds	
<u>55,258</u>	General Fund	<u>49,809.91</u>
	Designated Funds:	
3,335	Parish mission	3,335.00
2,500	Church Magazine	1,900.00
5,000	Church Windows	5,000.00
<u>10,835</u>		<u>10,235.00</u>
	Restricted Funds:	
600	Organ fund	600.00
0	Open Door	-
587	Youth work	587.00
160	New Testaments	160.00
1,863	Chapel fund	1,863.00
<u>3,210</u>		<u>3,210.00</u>
<u>69,303</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>	<u>63,254.91</u>