

Netherton and Sefton Team Ministry

St Oswald's, Netherton and St Helen's, Sefton

Sharing God's love across our communities

Parish Profile



Welcome!

Thank you for showing an interest in the position of Team Rector for the parishes of St Oswald's, Netherton and St Helen's, Sefton. Two different churches in the sense of tradition, location and facility, we joined together in Team Ministry in 2017. We worship together regularly and meet as a joint PCC for items we share in common. We look forward to further strengthening our relationship under the care and guidance of our new Team Rector.

The Team Ministry vision is to share God's generous love with all people across our communities.

We share a commitment to being inclusive. The PCCs have approved in principle the Prayers for Living and Love in Faith in both churches.

As a Team we are a work in progress: we are exploring growth using **LYCIG Local** materials, but find the necessary change challenging. We work together well but could do more; we strive to be inclusive but don't always get it right. We are looking for ways to be more sustainable and working towards Eco-Church awards, but our circumstances and contexts can make this difficult. We are seeking a Team Rector who will work with us to achieve these things and more.

Whoever walks with us can be assured of a very warm welcome. The PCCs of both parishes endorse the

As you prayerfully consider this role, we hope that our Parish Profile provides you with the information you need. We encourage you to look at our [Team Ministry Website](#), our facebook pages ([St Oswald](#), [St Helen](#)) and 'A Church Near You' ([St Oswald](#), [St Helen](#)).

God willing, we would love to welcome you as part of our Team Ministry.

PCCs of St Oswald's and St Helen's



Welcome

What we do together in our Team Ministry?

- We share a Team Vicar, 2 Readers and a self-supporting minister
- We have 2 PCC's. We hold our meetings together, discussing the things we share in common, before separating to discuss fabric and finance. Both churches find it difficult to gain a full complement of PCC members and wardens.
- A bimonthly Team Ministry Magazine is produced by members of the congregations
- Joint worship every 5th Sunday of the month alternating between each church.
- The "achurchnearyou" website for both churches is managed by the churchwarden of St Helen's.
- Volunteers from both churches work together to provide a distribution point of South Sefton Foodbank based at St Oswald's



Throughout the year both churches run a variety of social and fundraising events to bring congregations together and connect with the wider community - BBQ, Quiz events, meals, Christmas Fayres and Fun Days etc.

We have full representation on Deanery Synod. Both PCCs expect that our new Team Rector will be an active member of the Deanery as we explore *Fit For Mission* and opportunities for collaboration.

In our Team Ministry you will find a supportive and welcoming church community. We respect your time off and the need to care for your own wellbeing and that of your family.

We commit to working with you, to being open to new ways of working and helping to provide the resources you need.



In addition to the role description we are praying for an enthusiastic Team Rector who:

- has a passion for mission in a variety of contexts and will inspire growth across the team
- values both traditional, modern and more experimental styles of worship
- will facilitate further collaboration between the churches
- will enable lay and ordained colleagues to work to their strengths, and inspire new ministries
- will guide us through the complexities of “Fit for Mission” and into the future

To enable you to focus on mission priorities and supporting worship, members of the PCC take responsibility for administrative matters such as finance, buildings and maintenance, the church diary and preparation of materials to support services. Congregation and colleagues will pray with you and for you as you work with us.

We will honour your time off and encourage you to do likewise.

We will pay your work expenses promptly in full.



We pray that our new Rector teaches us from stories, is nice and generous and patient.

Amen

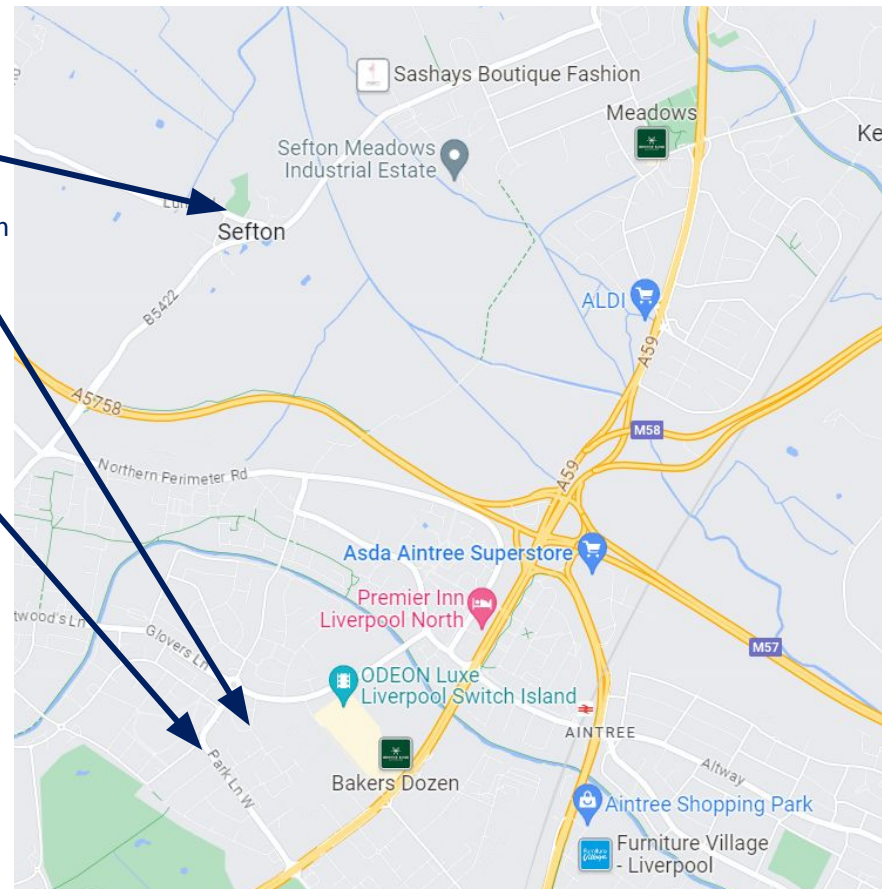
A prayer for our new Team Rector prepared by our children in Footsteps

The Vicarage is a four bedroomed, detached property with two bathrooms, a large garden and driveway with a garage is provided. The property is set back from the main road, within walking distance to St Oswald's Church and the neighbouring shops and transport links. The vicarage is a 5-10 minute drive to St. Helen's Church.

St Helen, Sefton

St. Oswald's, Netherton

The Vicarage



Things to see and do in the parishes:

- Lunt Meadows wetland nature reserve, a real destination for bird-lovers.
- Sefton Meadows & Lady Green garden centres
- Rimrose Valley Country Park
- Switch Island Retail Park and Cinema
- Shy Lowen Horse and Pony Sanctuary



Within easy reach: (with local transport links)

- Aintree Racecourse
- Crosby beach with Antony Gormley's Another Place
- Liverpool City Centre

Further afield (good for days off or short breaks)

- The Wirral
- Chester Zoo
- The North Wales Coastline
- The Lake District, and northern Peak District National Parks

Sharing the warmth of God's love with all people.

The Parish of St Oswald's is situated in the far south of the Sefton borough and is to the north east of the centre of Bootle. It comprises post war urban development with a range of both social and private housing. We also have within the parish an industrial park with commercial and light industry. It is situated close to the major interchange at Switch Island, at the end of the M57 and M58 motorways. The Leeds Liverpool canal runs through Netherton and the area is served by two railway stations, Aintree and Old Roan, on the Liverpool-Ormskirk line as well as regular bus services to Liverpool, Ormskirk and Southport.

The population of the Parish is approximately 24,000 and whilst there is some movement within the Parish, people often choose to remain within Netherton. The Parish has a broad social mix, with large pockets of deprivation. Parts of the Parish are in the 5% most deprived in the country, other areas in the 10% most deprived and still more which are not in poverty.

Netherton has seen considerable growth over the last 50 years. There is a leisure park, and the Marian Square shopping area within the Parish. There is a fire station and there are a number of community centres throughout the Parish including:

- The Feelgood Factory
- The Netherton Activity Centre
- The Netherton Park Neighbourhood Centre
- The L30 Community Centre

We have good links with our Church of England Primary School, and there are also two LEA primary schools, three RC primary schools, two Children's Centres and a private Nursery within the parish.

The Salesian Academy of St John Bosco RC secondary school is on the edge of the parish, and nearby Litherland and Maghull High schools serve many Netherton families. Nearby are Sefton Sixth Form College and Rowan Park School which caters for children up to the age of 19 with complex learning needs.



Volunteers from both congregations support the delivery of this essential service to our community. While the Food Bank is running, support is also offered by the Knowsley Credit Union and The Green Doctor (fuel and finance advice).



We host a Pensioner's Lunch Club, Sewing Connection sewing room, adult dance classes and an art group.

We are unable to offer our own youth provision but use grant funding to buy in professional youth services via ConquerLife CiC.

In October 2022 we opened Ozzy's Kitchen as part of Sefton Warm Spaces, providing a warm and safe space for our community where they could find hot food, companionship and support during the colder months. We have resumed our provision for 2023, operating as an "enhanced" warm space.

We also run a twice-monthly lunch club and a monthly all-inclusive café.

We regularly hold stay & play/stay & craft events, run a regular summer holiday club, and hold congregational quiz nights.

We are a large Parish and it is challenging to serve all areas and to do all that we aspire to. However, we are committed to encouraging the development of the ministry of any individual and are grateful to those people who dedicate their time and energy to support the life and mission of the church.

"Having been a member of St Oswald's congregation for a number of years, this year I have been elected to the PCC. I have been welcomed and encouraged to participate in the wider running of the Church. I am looking forward to working with a friendly group of people, supporting the Clergy and being involved in growing our Church community."

New member of St Oswald PCC

Our worship is modern in style. Whilst our services find their heart in common worship, we are flexible and adaptable to new ideas and forms of worship.

We are an inclusive, welcoming congregation encouraging justice and respect for all.

Services begin at 10am each Sunday morning. We offer a Sunday School for children called "Footsteps". Refreshments are offered at the end of each service.

1st Sunday

All age worship

2nd Sunday

Common Worship Holy Communion & Footsteps Sunday School.

3rd Sunday

Morning Prayer, (or Baptism) & Footsteps Sunday School

4th Sunday

Common Worship Holy Communion & Footsteps Sunday School.

5th Sunday

Team service (except for major festivals) alternating between each church and Footsteps Sunday School (*starting at 11am when in Sefton*)



Other regular services include:

- Weekly morning prayer each Thursday at 10.00am
- Monthly: Messy Church



Annual Services:

- Harvest and Christingle services with St. Oswald's School.
- Community Christingle service.
- Toy Service
- Nativity
- Memorial service for those who have been bereaved in the last year.
- Carol Service for a local LEA school.
- Team Ash Wednesday Service
- Maundy Thursday, Team Ministry Service with a fellowship meal
- Team Tenebrae Service

"Everyone said what a wonderful service it was & how lovely you all were with Joshua. I can't thank you enough."

Baptism Parent, St Oswald's

There are 51 people on the electoral roll and average attendance at the Church is 30, including children.

In 2022 we held 22 funerals, 20 baptisms.

We have very few weddings, most couples in the parish choose to be married at St Helen.

Communion is available for those who are unable to come to Church and there is a commitment to visiting those who are sick.

We have a weekly Bible Study group which takes place in a parishioner home.

We have a group appointed by the PCC to explore church growth, using Leading your Church into Growth LYCIG Local study materials.



All-age Worship

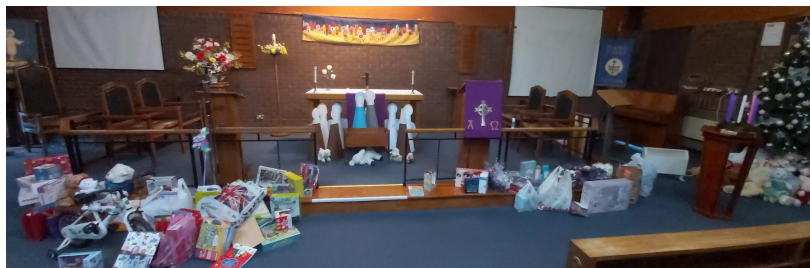
A member of the congregation serves as Governor at St Oswald's Primary School, and one of the Readers leads weekly assemblies. Clergy lead termly Services for early years children, Holy Communion for Key Stage 1&2, and end of term/year services, and take a lead in Ozzy's Childrens church (KS1 after-school worship and play)

The Team Vicar is Governor at one of the local community primary schools, and leads assemblies there as requested.

We have a team of people who read and serve in Church, and people are encouraged to explore and pursue their Ministries.

We actively support the Leprosy Mission and the Children's Society.

Harvest gifts are distributed to the food bank



Advent Toy and Gift Service

"I have been coming to St Oswald's for over 40 years. The church has been there to support me and my family through highs and lots of lows. I just love being part of it and find it a great comfort."

Congregation member

Our Building

St Oswald's, Netherton is a busy Church and Community Centre offering a wide range of services, activities and events. . The original building was dedicated in 1938, and local people helped to finance a new Church building in 1961. Due to structural faults this building was demolished in 1985 and a former infant school was then purchased and converted into a parish centre.

The worship area has seating for 150 people. For larger services and events, sound and video can be extended into the church hall.

We have recently upgraded our projectors and screens, and our sound system is currently being renewed. Wifi reaches all areas of the building, and we have separate free "guest wifi" for visitors and hall users.

There are excellent facilities including a substantial main hall, a cafe area, three well equipped kitchens, multiple toilet facilities, an office, a vestry, a sensory room and three other meeting rooms. There is a Memorial Garden at the rear of the Church and a substantial car park. We are currently seeking ways of making our building more energy efficient and make our day to day working practices more sustainable.

Our Finance

We pay our Parish Share in full. Whilst we do not have significant reserves we work hard to be self sufficient, relying on rental income and fundraising. We frequently use grant funding to enable us to fulfil our mission to serve the community, and grant bid-writing will be an aspect of the role, collaborating with the small team of members who have undertaken some training in this.. Our building is in a good state of repair, and we are awaiting our latest quinquennial report.



The Memorial garden



Ozzy's Kitchen cafe & hub

“Harvesting God’s love at the Cathedral of the Fields.”

Sefton Church is dedicated to St Helen and has been a place of continuous Christian worship for over 850 years. It is one of the oldest Christian sites on Merseyside and is the only Grade I listed building in the Metropolitan Borough of Sefton. Sefton Parish Church received 3 stars in Simon Jenkins book ‘England’s Thousand Best Churches’ in which he describes Sefton as ‘more than an oasis.’

It was probably founded about 1170 by the Molyneux family, the local landowners. There is no trace of the original church beyond a few carved fragments. The tower and steeple and part of the north aisle remain from a 14th century reconstruction.



“This is an absolute gem of a church, it is like a mini cathedral inside. A volunteer kindly showed us around and we were amazed how unspoilt and authentic it was. Congratulations to all those who care and look after this wonderful building and churchyard.”

Review from a Visitor

There is a fine peal of eight bells with the oldest pair dating back to 1588 and the organ is of very high quality. In 2020, our 850th year, we launched a Bells Appeal to restore the bell frames and tower and this was completed in July 2023. Subsequently we now have a vibrant bell ringing group who meet every Wednesday evening for practice who ring every Sunday and at other special services.



Bells before restoration



Bells after restoration

The Quinquennial Survey in September 2022 showed the building to be well looked after and in generally sound condition considering the age of the building. There were no urgent repairs identified but many minor works have been completed ahead of schedule.

Due to a generous bequest, we have been able to upgrade our car park and have a new kitchen installed together with a disabled access toilet.

“A fantastic place to visit, people are so enlightening and welcoming”

Review after Heritage Weekend

The churchyard is extensive and regularly maintained. There are a few empty plots some of which are reserved and there is an area specifically for cremated remains. There is a comprehensive map of the churchyard identifying each grave and an up-to-date maintenance plan. The churchyard contains 16 Commonwealth War Graves from both World Wars and the grave of the inventor of transfer printing John Sadler.



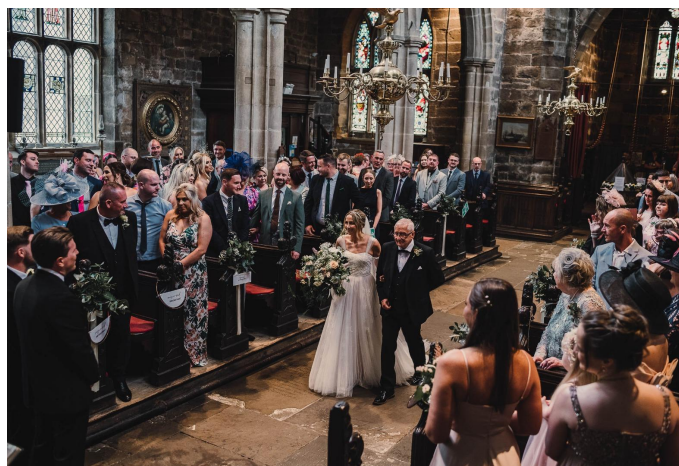
[Drone footage from Sefton Churchyard](#)

Sefton Church continues to be a living centre of Christian worship and we aim to be an inclusive church where everyone can feel respected and at home. It is still regarded as the “mother church” of the area and is also one of the Civic churches of the Borough of Sefton.

The heritage of our building together with an opportunity for stunning photography means that weddings at Sefton are very popular. The unique surroundings and a large congregation capacity, together with an opportunity for a magnificent church organ to accompany the service means that we often have a full diary through the year, the summer months in particular.

“Getting married in St Helen’s Church was everything we have ever dreamed of ... The church welcomed our family with open arms and ensured our children were a part of the service and the day. Thank you so much again to everyone from the church it truly was the best day of our lives and it would not have been as special as it was without all your help’.”

Wedding couple



“The wedding service was absolutely perfect and we had the most magical day! So many of our guests commented on how beautiful the Church was.”

Wedding couple

We are a rural parish sandwiched between the two urban towns of Great Crosby/Thornton and Maghull. The boundaries follow the River Alt to the north and the A56 and B5194 to the south. The church is situated just off the main A5758 Broom's Cross Road which leads to the Switch Island motorways and the main dual carriageway to Southport. It lies within the Green Belt and a Conservation Area.

Most of the population of 1500 people are concentrated in Sefton and Ince Blundell, with lesser numbers in the hamlets of Lunt and Homer Green. There are also arable farms and small holdings in what is Grade 1 agricultural land. There are no schools or community centres in this rural Parish.

There is a 19th century Mill complex now converted into housing and there are two Persimmon housing developments adjacent to the church. Sefton has its own Parish Council, a football team and a bowling green.



Sefton Church with "Ego at the Punchbowl "

The church is at the centre of Sefton village with a thriving pub "Ego at the Punch Bowl" who work closely with us to promote our church events.



A short walk from the church is St Helen's Well which is now capped off but it was renowned for its icy waters which were especially good for people suffering from rheumatism, sprains, bruising and, also nervous problems.

In pre-Reformation times it was much in use, but later on it became a wishing well where pins were thrown in by young folk hoping for good luck in a forthcoming marriage at Sefton church.



Our worship is traditional and choral, using both BCP and Common Worship to good effect, reflecting both our history and our aspiration.

Services begin at 11am each Sunday morning,

1st Sunday	Common Worship Holy Communion
2nd Sunday	Common Worship Morning Prayer
3rd Sunday	BCP Holy Communion
4th Sunday	Baptism or Common Worship Morning Prayer
5th Sunday	Team service (except for major festivals) alternating between each church (starting at 10am when in Netherton)



"My son's confirmation was held in this lovely old church, with a great mix of people and stunning stained glass windows and wood carvings."

Confirmation Parent

Annual Services

- Feast days (which do not fall on a Sunday)
- Sea Sunday service where the collection is donated to the Mission to Seafarers.
- Harvest Praise service.
- Pet Blessing service.
- Candlemas service.
- Memorial service for those who have been bereaved.

- Remembrance Day service beginning at the War Memorial opposite church with dignitaries attending from the Parish Council, Sefton MBC, Police, etc.
- 9 Lessons and Carols and Christmas Eve Midnight Communion, both lit by candles and oil lamps.
- Christingle service
- Plough Sunday

"Sefton Church brings back my childhood memories and when I walk in I feel closer to God and among friends. It will always have a special place in my heart."

Congregation member

Our congregation is drawn mainly from outside the parish from a wide surrounding area and covers the whole age spectrum.

There are 53 people on the electoral roll and an average attendance at Sunday services is 30, seasonal services average 100 people.

In 2022 we had 15 Baptisms, 16 Funerals and 11 Weddings.

We have a talented choir who together with our organist rehearse once a week on a Friday afternoon.

Whilst we have a core of very hard working, committed volunteers, we are an aging population and struggle to find people to take on new roles..

Regular activities include: A weekly "Monday Club" when volunteers help to clean and tidy around the church and the graveyard with an opportunity for social interaction; A monthly "Coffee Morning" where there is an opportunity to catch up and have a chat and Sefton Social Circle who meet for occasional social events e.g. afternoon tea, Abba lunch and concert and Christmas party.

There is a well equipped children's area available every service which children and parents are encouraged to use within church.

For 30 years 'The Friends of Sefton' raised funds and shared the heritage and uptake of this fine building. Although 'The Friends' no longer operate as a formal group, members continue to offer their time, energy and expertise in the care of the building and the telling of its story.

Holy Communion is willingly taken to the home of anyone housebound and home visits are regularly arranged. We have five Eucharistic Ministers and three Sacristans.

Although we do not have a church hall we have a wide range of fundraising activities which take place during the year.



There is a rota of sidespersons to welcome the congregation and Bible readers and Prayer leaders for all services.

The church attracts many visitors either by appointment or when the church is open every Monday morning or on Easter Bank Holiday Open Day or Heritage weekends. At our most recent heritage weekends we were visited by 475 people. This included 25 children who visited from St Oswald's Primary School. The children took part in brass rubbing, crafts and followed a Heritage Trail.



There is a constant demand for information about the church and people researching their family history from around the UK, USA and Canada.

We support the Children's Society, the Mission to Seafarers and specific international appeals when required.

The bounty of the Harvest Festival is distributed to The Trussell Trust Foodbank based at St Oswald's Church and to elderly people of the Parish.

We are up to date with Parish Share and remain within our planned budget.

Fundraising is high on the agenda and several social events during the year are well attended, eg. Dickensian Fayre, Ukulele Concert, 1950's Afternoon Tea to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of our late Queen, a Male Voice Choir Concert and a Brass Band Concert.

A Parish Trip is organised in the summer months which is open to family and friends.

"Many churches do not have choirs, so I was delighted to join the Sefton choir (having been encouraged to do so after 3 weeks of attending the church) and have been there ever since!"

Choir Member



"Feeling overwhelmed with emotion of how beautiful it was. All my friends and family spoke how amazing you were and how beautiful the church is. You all really made it feel so personal and I honestly am filled with joy."

Baptism of twin boys, Sefton