



ST. NICHOLAS, HULL

PARISH PROFILE



*'Knowing Jesus and making
Jesus known'*

Profile Reviewed & Updated
October 2024
St Nicholas PCC

St. Nicholas Church



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Greetings in Christ's name!



Thank you for prayerfully discerning God's calling to the parish of St. Nicholas, West Hull and also to the East Riding Archdeaconry in the Diocese of York. We trust this profile will begin to give you an understanding of the church and parish, but above all, we welcome you to come and meet us here!

This post has become available at a very significant time in the life of the Diocese.

We have committed together in Living Christ's Story to being people who tell the story of Jesus' life death and resurrection and who also tell the continuing story of what Jesus has done through his church, which includes what Jesus has done and continues to do through each of our own lives. These are times that require us to be simple, humble and bold.

To make the vision of Living Christ's Story a reality, our diocesan goals are:

- Becoming more like Christ
- Reaching people we currently don't
- Growing churches of missionary disciples
- Transforming our finances and structures

You can explore this vision and our commitment to this journey on our Diocesan website.

This role is full of opportunities for someone who is open evangelical and enjoys urban estates ministry. As you will see the church also brings variety in their styles of worship, approach and the gift of a broad range of ages. There is a genuine warmth and generosity within the church but also a commitment to mission and serving their diverse communities. There is good lay leadership and, until recently, a pioneer minister. who was part of the Diocesan-wide Multiply Project.

The church is very honest about their current challenges to reach out into the estates and share God's love in an economically deprived parish. They are excited about this new season and looking forward with faith and anticipation to what the next chapter of their life will bring.

As a Diocese we pray together the prayer of Teresa of Avila, "Lord, what do you want from me?" This is our prayer for Living Christ's Story. We pray this prayer particularly for you in this time of discernment. We hope that you will hear Christ's call clearly and we look forward to prayerfully sharing this discernment with you.

Please contact the Ven Andy Broom, Archdeacon by email (ader@yorkdiocese.org) if you have questions or would like a fuller picture than the Profile offers. We want to do all we can to support you as you explore and discern this call.

With our prayers,

+Eleanor (Bishop of Hull)

Welcome

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about St Nicholas Church. We are pleased to share some of the amazing work that God has been doing among us, as well as some of the opportunities we are discerning for the future. We trust you find this information helpful as you prayerfully consider whether God may be calling you to be our next vicar.



Our Church

St Nicholas Church is a warm, friendly, Open Evangelical church. The heart of our church is expressed in our vision statement, 'Knowing Jesus and Making Jesus Known'. We want to know and love Jesus more each day and share his love with those around us.

The Bible is central to everything we do and we seek to understand and apply it to our lives. We want to be transformed by the work of the Holy Spirit, and see this transforming work in our community.

God is at work in our community and we want to discern this work and join in. We want to be a church at the heart of the community, that responds to the needs of those around us with the love of God, and that proclaims the gospel afresh in this generation and in this place.

We aspire to be like a family, offering a big, hospitable welcome to everyone, caring for one another well, enjoying being together, and sharing in God's mission here in West Hull.

Sunday Worship



We meet for worship on Sundays at 10am. This is a relaxed, informal, family-friendly service with Holy Communion and an average attendance of 35. Clergy tend not to robe.

This service has changed significantly over the last few years, becoming less formal, with greater participation, and an openness to the work of the Holy Spirit among us.

We are fortunate to have a broad range of ages in our congregation including a number of families with children. We have worked hard to make our church accessible for everyone, including those with physical or learning disabilities. We enjoy an ethnically diverse congregation including a number of individuals and families who have recently joined us from Nigeria.



Uplifting and inspiring sung worship, which helps us encounter God, is important to us. We currently use Worship Lyric Videos. This allows for a mixture of modern worship songs and traditional hymns sung in a lively and upbeat style.

A few singers recently formed a small group to lead our sung worship. This area is ripe for development as we consider how best to shape our worship to be both accessible and engaging for our community.



Unpacking the Bible is central to our worship and we feel it is important to have accessible and interesting teaching that helps us follow Jesus in our daily lives.

We share Holy Communion each week, including with children, and find this is a special moment where each person, regardless of age or ability, can meet with Jesus for themselves.

Many people contribute to Sunday worship, including those who read from the Bible, lead prayers, operate the sound desk and projection equipment, welcome people, and serve refreshments after the service.

Once a month we have an All-Age service, led by a team of lay leaders, which, where appropriate, incorporates BSL. The service is more relaxed, interactive, and creative, and is intended to be accessible to everyone. This has allowed the lay team to step up into leadership more fully on a Sunday morning.



Church Life Beyond Sundays

St Nicholas is a sociable and active community and we enjoy meeting together beyond Sunday mornings, spending time together, as well as connecting with and seeking to bless our wider community. Our missional approach has been around building relationships in the wider community, being a blessing, and seeking to gently share faith in that context. We do this through various gatherings:

- **Prayer group**- this small but committed gathering meets weekly to pray for the life of the church and for one another. We recognise that nothing of significance happens without prayer and we want to engage more deeply in prayer as a community.



- **Little Lambs**- is our weekly parent and toddler group, run by an engaged, active team that spends quality time with children and their parents or carers. Families are invited to attend special services such as our Christmas Nativity. This is a busy and popular group which we feel has real potential for development and to feed, more meaningfully, into the wider life of the church.

- **Coffee morning** - was set up in response to the cost-of-living crisis, affecting many in our Church and parish. We want to provide a warm space with low- priced snacks and drinks, with free toast and juice for children.
In October 2023, we registered with the Warm Welcome Space campaign, and can now be found on the Warm Welcome Space Map
The group is slowly growing in number, by word of mouth and the Community Policing Teams.
The aim is to establish a warm, welcoming, safe environment, free from stress and anxiety. And where opportunities arise, to share God’s Love together.
- **Breakfast Club**- this small group goes out for breakfast together once a month, helping us to build relationships and invite friends and family beyond the regular congregation.



In the past we have held different social events such as quiz nights, day trips to Dalby Forest, men’s nights, concerts, etc. Some energy for this was lost during the Covid-19 pandemic and while our vicar was on sick leave. We need a fresh strategy and vision to engage missionally with our community and develop pathways of discipleship that offer an opportunity for those we connect with to explore faith more deeply and become integrated into the worshipping life of the church. We love God, one another, and our community and would appreciate someone to help us connect the dots and think more strategically about our mission and ministry.

Many people contribute to the life and ministry of the church. We currently have two Church Warden, a Safeguarding Officer, Treasurer and a PCC consisting of seven members that meets monthly.

Our Buildings

Our church building was built in the 1970s on the site of the original church (built in 1925) and is in a good state of repair. In 2018, we reordered the building to allow greater flexibility and an improved response to the opportunities for mission and ministry in our community. We replaced pews with chairs and carpeted throughout. We installed a projector and screen and updated our audio/visual equipment. This created a comfortable, yet flexible space that can be used for worship, and other types of gatherings. Our liturgy and songs are all projected and are controlled either from the a/v desk or by the service leader from an iPad. In 2023 a new heating system was installed. The Emmaus Room, a small room off the main church, forms a sensory room: a calm and regulating space for children with additional needs. This includes a black-out tent, bubble tubes, bean bags, sensory lights, and sensory toys.



The church hall was built in 1984 and includes two large function rooms, a meeting room, and a large, well-equipped kitchen. The hall is used for church events and also by various community groups for a fee. The hall is in an excellent state of repair and is an important income stream for the church, as well as providing a point of contact with many groups within the community.

A large garden area surrounds the church and includes our Garden of Remembrance, which allows for the burial of ashes. We have no graveyard.



Our Parish

St Nicholas Church is situated on Hessle High Road, between the village centre of Hessle and the city centre of Hull. Our parish comprises Gypsyville estate, the south side of Boothferry estate, and the Pickering Road, and Summergroves areas of private housing.

The church building is situated between the two estates and was originally designed to be at the centre of the community but one of the challenges today is to reach out onto the estates when we are not situated on either.

Hessle Road was historically the vibrant, densely populated, close-knit fishing hub of Hull. Gypsyville estate housed many of those working in the fishing industry and their families. After the decline of the fishing industry in the 1970s, Boothferry estate was built to rehouse those who needed to move out of poor housing on Hessle Road. This resulted in a great loss of community cohesion and sense of togetherness. Boothferry estate still feels the effects of this.

Our parish is home to around 12,000 people and sits within the 3% most economically deprived parishes in the UK. There is huge need but also many opportunities to bless and share the love of Jesus in our community. There is often a significant cultural gap between our very working-class community and the culture of the Church of England. Sharing faith in a way that is accessible and culturally relevant to our parish can be challenging and requires a willingness to listen well, and experiment creatively.



The Parish contains two primary schools, one secondary school, two special schools, and a pupil referral unit. The clergy have particularly good relationships with one of the primary schools, the special schools, and the PRU where they regularly take assemblies or support learning. Pupils also visit St Nicholas for special occasions such as Christmas and Easter. Good relationships exist between the church and all the schools in the parish and we want to strengthen these links.

Our City

Hull is a vibrant and lively city of 289,000 people in the East Riding of Yorkshire. It lies on the confluence of the river Hull and the Humber Estuary.

Hull was founded in the 12th Century and has a long history as a port exporting wool, military supplies, and as a large and thriving fishing port. Hull also has a complex history of poverty and disadvantage. 95% of the city was damaged in the blitz and the decline of the fishing industry hit our parish particularly hard.

In 2017, Hull was UK City of Culture and the great creativity, rich heritage and vibrant artistic scene was celebrated. Hull has experienced large amounts of regeneration in the city centre in recent years. The area boasts a wide array of interesting places to eat and drink and some worthwhile museums and attractions in the city centre.

One challenge, however, is that this investment in the city centre doesn't often touch the outer estates of the city where we are situated.

Within easy reach of the city of Hull there is beautiful countryside in the Yorkshire Wolds, and a stunning coastline not far away.



Our Hopes for the Future

We are committed to the diocesan vision of 'Living Christ's Story' and the goals of 'becoming more like Christ', 'reaching people we currently don't', 'growing churches of missionary disciples' and 'transforming our finances and structures'.

In order to reach these goals, we have identified a number of key areas for growth and development in our church.

Deepen Discipleship:

In order to be effective in mission and share God's love with those around us, we must first be transformed by that love ourselves. We long to know Jesus better and to learn how to walk in his footsteps.

One key area for development is the deepening of our discipleship through prayer and Bible study. In the past we met in small groups for prayer, Bible study and enquirer's courses such as Alpha and Start and we are keen to develop these again. Literacy levels are quite low in our community, so this must be done creatively



Children, Families and Youth Ministry:

We have a committed core of young families, and good relationships with a much wider network through our Little Lambs groups. Children's activities are available in the main worship area during services for families to engage in with their children, plus our monthly all-age service. We are keen to develop youth work as we have a number of children now entering this demographic.

We recognise that children, youth, and families work is an area of church life requiring development. We want to prioritize outreach to these groups and ensure that worship is genuinely accessible for everyone. Many building blocks are already in place to reach this demographic but we are now looking for someone to bring strategic oversight, help us connect the dots, identify gaps and move us forward.

Raising up Leaders:

Many in the congregation pitch in and serve in a variety of wonderful ways. However, this is a challenging context for raising leaders into positions of responsibility, supporting the clergy in spiritual leadership and oversight. Many lack confidence and, despite deep faith, struggle to step forward. Encouragement and ongoing support is needed so people feel able to step into leadership roles. Having said that, we have a committed and capable lay team who lead our coffee mornings, and our toddler group. And a team has recently started to plan and lead our monthly all-age service. We hope this can be built upon, and that the whole church family can be released into mission and ministry together.



More effectively reach the housing estates in our parish:

Although some of our congregation live on the Boothferry and Gipsyville estates, our impact in these areas is limited and we would like to become more effective in our mission here. The estates are areas of significant financial challenges, with opportunities to engage positively with their needs.



Strategically approach the whole life of the church:

St Nicholas is a caring, responsive, welcoming community with many encouraging and life-giving facets. We are particularly good at creating community spaces with a warm welcome, where positive relationships can be built. St Nicholas is well-regarded and people feel warmly towards the church.



However, we haven't always deliberately created pathways of discipleship allowing people to journey from initial warm contacts, to commitments of faith, fully integrated into the worshipping community. In this next chapter, we will benefit from a strategic approach to activities with consideration to how they fit into the discipleship journey we invite people into.



The Person We Need

We are praying for a new vicar with these qualities, skills, and experience:

- A passionate person of faith, led by the Holy Spirit and grounded in the Scriptures. Someone with an inspiring faith and a sustaining, deeply-rooted life of prayer.
- Someone with a heart for sharing the gospel, especially with those who don't yet know Jesus, who can discern opportunities for mission within our community, being prepared to take risks and try new things.
- Someone who can help us deepen our discipleship by encouraging a culture of prayer, inspiring worship, and engaging with the Bible in small groups and opportunities beyond Sunday morning services.
- An empowering leader who can discern the gifts and skills of others, committed to raise up lay leadership within the church and to mentor and support our lay teams.
- Someone passionate about, and gifted in, children, families and youth ministry with a commitment to see this area grow and flourish.
- A strategic thinker to support the development of pathways of discipleship that offer opportunities to explore faith and become part of our worshipping life.
- Someone with a heart for people, particularly those facing difficulties in economically-challenged communities. Someone gifted at getting alongside people and encouraging those with diverse backgrounds and experiences.

Our Finances

Our income in 2023 was £40,000, with 48% from rental of the church hall and 43% from our regular giving, including gift aid. The balance derives from coffee mornings, Little Lambs, and fees from weddings and funerals.

In 2023, income was spent on our Free-Will Offering (47%), and the maintenance of facilities (26%). Also in 2023 we set aside six months' worth of operating expenses in an investment account.

Although our finances are in reasonable shape, there is a need to grow our income to ensure that it keeps up with increasing expenses, and further outreach to the local community.

For full more information and to view our accounts please contact our treasurer Mary Blair at mblair1820@gmail.com

The Vicarage

The vicarage is a spacious six-bedroom 100-year old home, on Hessele High Road, beside St. Nicholas Church.





It is a relatively modern house with a spacious living room, dining room, good-sized kitchen (fitted in 2005), and a WC on the ground floor.

To the left of the entrance hall is a study, separated from the rest of the home.

Upstairs are six double bedrooms: four on the first floor, and another two on the second floor.



There is an electronically-gated driveway with parking for several cars, a security system, and a large mature garden, laid mainly to lawn, to the front and also backing onto Pickering Park in the rear.

A one-car garage is at the front of the house, and a greenhouse is in the back garden.



Thank you for taking the time to read our parish profile. If you would like any further information, or for an informal discussion about this post, please contact The Ven. Andy Broom, Archdeacon, in the first instance at: ader@yorkdiocese.org

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