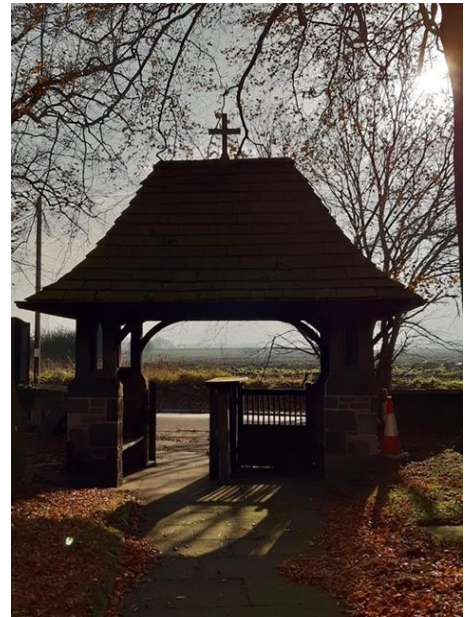


St James Westhead

KNOWING JESUS | MAKING HIM KNOWN



P A R I S H P R O F I L E



VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is for our parish to grow spiritually and numerically through

- Sharing Jesus' love among ourselves
- Individually and purposefully growing closer to God
- Together nurturing and supporting each other's journey of faith
- Valuing and encouraging everyone's spiritual gifts

and being committed to

- sharing Jesus with the wider community through word and action
- building worshipping communities within the parish

As we focus on this vision, St James will grow to be a Bigger Church and make a Bigger Difference.

WELCOME TO ST JAMES WESTHEAD

This vision has been our focus through a prolonged period of interregnum – pre, during and post pandemic – and we are passionate about knowing Jesus and making Him known within our church, our community and the wider world.

As you read our profile we hope and pray that you will feel called to this role of leadership here at St James.

Our aim is to serve our community, be a place where we can encounter Jesus and make Him known to others.

In support of our vision, we are motivated to connect with all in our community and in recognition of the diversity not only do we use digital media, but also telephone, visiting, newsletter distribution and support of the school community and the village hall.

We provide and embrace varying worship styles to meet the needs of the congregation whilst striving to reach out to newcomers.



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Our current areas for development are

- to rebuild and grow our Family and Children's Ministry
- to review and develop our outreach to include the new housing estate and university.

Prayer underpins all we do.

God has sustained us and enabled us, as a church and as individuals, through difficult times and we are singing His praises louder than ever and we count the blessings - a growing church community, a successful school/church partnership, buildings in excellent condition and a sound financial situation.

We're ready to fly. Do you want to come with us?

For more information you can access our website, A Church Near You, and Facebook page.

[St James Westhead - Home](#)

[St James Westhead - A Church Near You](#)

www.facebook.com/stjameswesthead



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THE VICAR WE WANT - COULD THIS BE YOU?

We would like our new minister to be...

Someone who

- Will lead us to grow in faith and numbers.
- Has energy, optimism and a forward-thinking approach.
- Is able to encourage and develop the ministry of members of the congregation.
- Will work collaboratively with us, as we go forward.
- Is competent with modern technology in the church and office.
- Will help us engage with the new housing areas we do not serve effectively at the moment.
- Is dedicated to continuing and developing the strong links with our local school.
- Is warm and approachable with a sense of humour.



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WHAT DO WE OFFER YOU?

- A friendly, enthusiastic church family full of ideas
- A welcoming church – with cake!
- Support
 - PCC administrative support
 - building and maintenance
 - stewardship
 - committed volunteers
 - support within the Ormskirk Deanery and local cluster of churches from stipendiary and retired clergy with permission to officiate
 - support for training and development including consideration of a financial contribution
 - prayer
- Facilitate your focus on mission and ministry
- Respect for your chosen working pattern, time off and holidays
- Reimbursement of expenses in line with Diocesan guidance
- A clergy house-for-duty



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AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Rebuild and Grow our Family & Children's Ministry

- During 2020 our Under 18s Ministry paused, coinciding with fewer ministry team members.
- Our current provision for children is on Sunday mornings with child-centred programmes led by the ministry team or children joining the congregation with an activity area available.
- In the village hall, half-termly we run Bible-based fun activity sessions for families.
- We are considering working closely with local schools to develop our family ministry.



Develop our Outreach Programme

- A key challenge and opportunity is the now populated 94 home new estate. An additional 330 planned homes are under construction and a completed phase has recently started to be populated. When complete this will be a 44% increase in the number of homes in the parish.
- The Student Ministry Team are currently developing plans for the new academic year, including attending the Christian Union Church Search.
- Three church members will attend Leading Your Church Into Growth (LYCIG) Training in October.

The prayer and work continue.

ABOUT THE CHURCH

The People

Collaborative ministry is integral to our church with lay people taking many roles. There are teams for family and children's ministry, pastoral care, lay leadership, worship and music groups, church access, cleaning, gardening, Eco church, student ministry, welcoming and refreshments as well as local outreach. These established groups are keen to meet, get to know and provide support for a new incumbent as they have done for the churchwardens.

Reverend John Sephton aka Rev John, a lifelong member of St James Church and retired Ordained Local Minister with Permission To Officiate in the Liverpool Diocese, has served faithfully at St James' for many years. In recent years, with the support of his wife Janette and God's enabling, his contribution has been immeasurable in all aspects of our church life and work. He is well-loved and respected within the church, the school and the community and will continue to serve as God directs and guides.



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The growing congregation has changed significantly since the 2020 pandemic. There is an enthusiasm, good fellowship, and a love for others in this Bible based Church.

There is now a wider age profile and a variety of new worshippers have joined us who are currently being nurtured. In 2023 seven of our members were confirmed by the Bishop of Warrington. Their ages ranged from 10-70 years. It was a wonderfully inspiring service.

The number of regular attendees is 65 adults and 11 children. From 2022 to 2023, the average adult Sunday attendance increased by 16% taking us above our 2019 average. Life events in 2022 and 2023 totalled 18 baptisms, 5 weddings, 18 funerals, 12 burials of ashes & 7 confirmations.



Sundays

We worship every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. followed by refreshments. We hold a variety of services during each month.

- Holy Communion – gives the opportunity for all to come close to Our Lord Jesus as we honour the sacrifice He made for us. Those who don't want to take Communion can receive a blessing
- Praise and Worship – has more music and less liturgy

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- Morning Prayer – is usually a quieter, more reflective service with organ music, hymn and service books
- Community Praise is informal and inclusive, relevant and friendly, good for all ages and those new to church

Sunday services can be accessed on YouTube.

Weekdays

- Prayer In The Evening is a weekly prayer time online and open to everyone
- The Alpha Course is held regularly
- Weekly Bible study 'Living in Faith Everyday (LIFE)' is held online during term time

The School

There are strong links with Westhead Lathom St James Church of England School. Rev John visits school regularly to lead or speak at collective worship. The school has a strong Christian commitment and staff and pupils visit church for worship regularly. They join us for seasonal services such as harvest and Christmas as well as the leavers' service. Parents are supportive of their children for services in church but are not regular members of the congregation. The PCC appoints two foundation governors and other church members help with the school Ethos group. As the school has no large indoor space for full school events and performances the church is also used for activities which they are unable to accommodate. The older children visit church for gardening sessions twice a year and there are other occasions when classes come to church for topics relevant to their coursework.

[Part of a Prayer Station Trail around church produced by school](#)



In The Community

The church building is used for weekly Saturday Coffee and Chat, weekly classes for ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages), is the Hub for the Ormskirk and West Lancashire Homes for Ukraine Support Group (set up and administered in collaboration with the Ormskirk Community Partnership), a monthly

community gardening group in the church grounds, pop-up cafes, and there are hobby gardens on adjacent church land.



Westhead Village Hall is used for various church outreach events. CAMEO (Come and Meet Each Other) is a popular monthly community social afternoon, at the end of which there is the opportunity to take communion before leaving. Family, Fun and Food is a family outreach initiative held on Saturday teatime once each half-term.

Several church members are involved with, and the church supports, the Lions Club, the Rotary Club, Midstream (West Lancs) Ltd., Ormskirk Foodbank and The Liberty Centre.

The church subscribes to Churches Together in Ormskirk participating in the Good Friday Walk of Witness, the biennial Park Praise and the Christmas Switch-On.

We tithe to two mission partners, currently 57:fourteen and Mission Aviation Fellowship. Mission partners are reviewed every three years.

The Building

In a meeting to discuss the Quinquennial Inspection the church was considered by the Diocesan Buildings Advisor, Tom Beesley, to be in excellent condition and well maintained by the wardens and maintenance team.

Other facilities within the church building are a fellowship area with adjoining kitchen, upper meeting room with two adjacent small meeting rooms, a vestry with smaller adjoining vestry.

And its Surroundings

Across the road from the church an area of land, historically the site of the verger's house, is now an area of 10 hobby gardens which are worked by members of the church and community for an annual donation to the church.

The church itself is surrounded by graveyard on three sides. At the front there are a number of large trees which have tree preservation orders and at the back the graveyard is surrounded by hedges. These are all maintained in good order.



However, there is little room left in the graveyard now and there is an ongoing project to alleviate this problem. Glebe Land adjacent to the burial ground belongs to the Diocese. We will be able to develop the glebe land for burials when land registration has been completed.



Glebe Land outlined in blue

History

The church was built from local sandstone and consecrated by the Bishop of Chester in 1851. The Earl of Derby chose the famous and well-respected architect Sydney Smirke to design the church. He was instructed that the church was to have a steeple and a side aisle and the windows were to be in the early 14th century style.

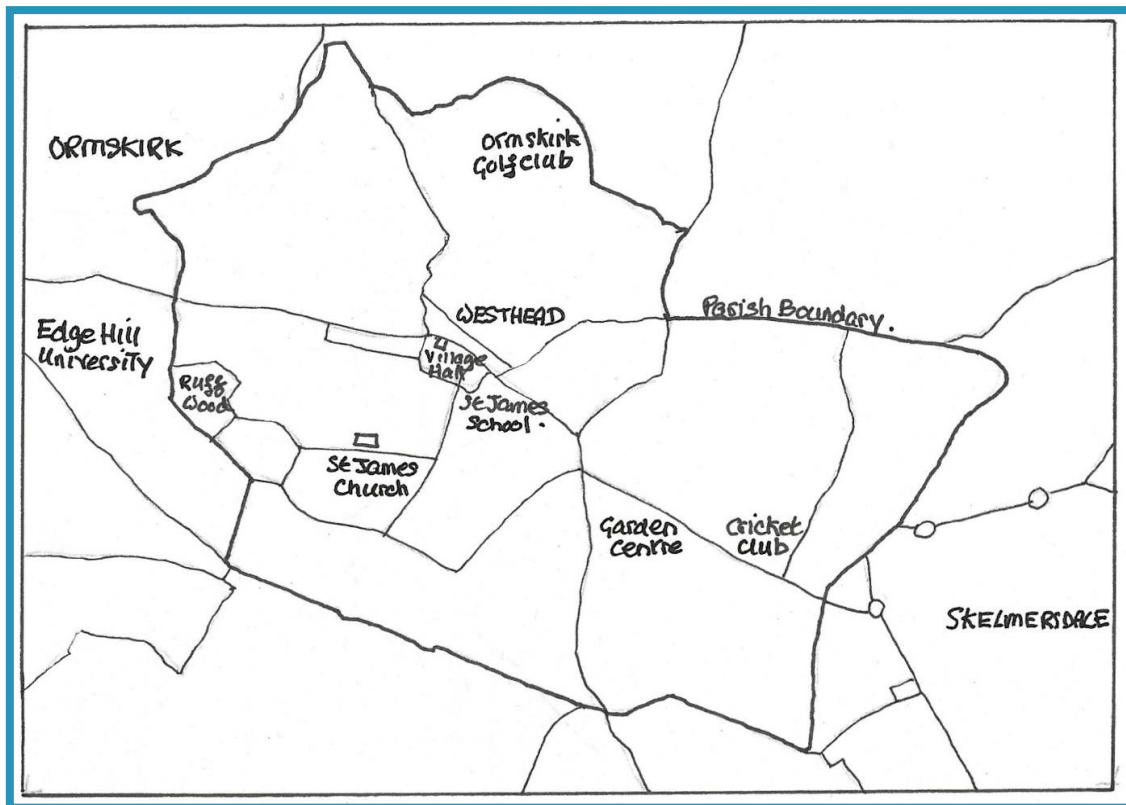
The church and lychgate are both Grade II listed buildings.

Although a “Victorian” church with 14th century style windows, modifications have taken place throughout its 173 years, most recently in 2023, and the inside offers a variety of spaces and, we believe, blends old and new to meet the needs of a 21st century church and 21st century worship. In common with many rural village churches, many of the residents have strong family connections with the church and its surroundings and support our church in various ways but do not worship with us.

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THE PARISH

The church is part of the Ormskirk Deanery and Westhead village is on one of the main routes from Ormskirk to Skelmersdale and Wigan. The village hall, primary school and pub are all on the main Wigan Road. The church (on Vicarage Lane) is surrounded by farmland and some houses and is about ten minutes' walk from the village.



The parish is semi-rural and made up of five distinct areas

- the village of Westhead
- the Vicarage Lane area between the church and Edge Hill University
- a part of north west Ormskirk
- Lathom Pastures & Latune Gardens new housing estates
- populated rural areas linking all of the above

We distribute our newsletter to all properties in the Parish, 970 last time. There are currently 106 people on the church Electoral Roll which is due for renewal in 2025.

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The Village

Westhead is a thriving village community with Westhead Village Hall which hosts activities for church as well as other local events, Westhead Lathom St James Church of England Primary School, Prince Albert Pub which is popular for meals and also a traditional “local” and a sports field with children’s playground and community orchard behind the school.

And outside The Village

Other key places that may offer opportunities within the wider parish are Skelmersdale Cricket Club, Warbreck Garden Centre, Ormskirk Golf Club, Ormskirk School, and Ruff Woods.

THE WIDER CONTEXT

We collaborate with a local cluster of churches – Holy Trinity Bickerstaffe, St Michael’s Aughton, Christ Church Aughton and St Mark’s Scarisbrick. The clergy meet and support each other, sharing some resources and joining together for Alpha study groups and occasional Sunday services.



Local Cluster Pentecost Service

Whilst our church upholds the Fit for Mission priorities of

- Introducing people to Jesus
- Deepening discipleship
- Developing new Christian leaders
- Working for Justice

we decided not to take the next steps on the Fit for Mission journey. The priorities are, however, a solid foundation for the ongoing ministry at St James Westhead.

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A Statement from Ormskirk Deanery

St James Westhead is situated at the heart of the Deanery of Ormskirk. The Deanery is one of the largest in Liverpool Diocese and is an area of contrasts, with rural villages, market towns, commuter belts and a heavily populated new town. We have some church buildings from the 20th Century and others that date back to the 13th.

The Deanery Clergy Chapter is welcoming and supportive and values times of worship, retreat and fun alongside effectively working together in mission and ministry. Stipendiary clergy and self-supporting ministers are ably supported by a number of retired clergy and Readers.

St James Westhead is a valued part of the Deanery. It is a welcoming church who are prayerful and mission minded. They have been in interregnum for a number of years but have seen growth in that time and remain a well-run church with a positive outlook. They have done good work in the areas of pastoral care and schools ministry amongst others, and as a Deanery we have recognised that their proximity to Edge Hill University may offer mission opportunities going forward.

St James Westhead has affirmed and has been blessed by the contribution of ordained women in public ministry and the Deanery and Diocese would look for this approach to continue.

Our assessment of St James's church building is that it is in a good state of repair, and the church currently pays its parish share in full

As a Deanery our priorities are overtly missional, encouraging the development of missional communities, fresh expressions, pioneering ventures and school and community contacts.

We very much look forward to welcoming the new House for Duty Priest at Westhead into our Deanery.

Rev Chris Spittle, Area Dean of Ormskirk
Mark Taylor, Lay-Chair of Ormskirk Deanery

House For Duty

This is an interim house for duty post with a 3 year option which can be extended to 6 years.

VICARAGE: 33 Elmers Green, WN8 6RZ
(formerly occupied by Archdeacon Jennifer Mackenzie)



For more up-to-date information please email
Churchwarden@stjameswesthead.org.uk