

St. John the Divine, Menston with Woodhead



"We love how friendly and welcoming St. John's is."

A Church Member



Vicar of St John's Menston Bishop's Statement 2024

St John's Menston is a single church parish with a growing population of around 7000 people (up from 5,600 in the 2011 census). 1000 new homes have been built in recent years, and over another 100 (more affordable) homes are planned. The population is predominantly white British on median or better incomes, living in owner-occupied houses and with a life expectancy at the top of the range in the Diocese. Good rail and road links enable many people to commute into Leeds or Bradford. The parish has a variety of small shops but little or no industry.

There is a great opportunity for the new incumbent to have a clear focus in the parish and to do parish ministry well. St John's enjoys a good standard of lay leadership and associated structures. Much of the congregation have been faithful and generous, both financially and with their time, for many years. Over the past 6 years under the previous incumbent's leadership, significant growth has been seen with families, especially through Zest, a new Sunday morning congregation with an emphasis on welcome, informality, fun and exploring faith in varied ways, and Sunday evening activities focused on young people. The PCC has supported the fresh vision and clear leadership that has led to this, and now has a much broader age-range of members.

As well as the recently re-roofed church, there is an adjacent well-used church hall which hosts many groups and activities, both church and community-run. There are good relationships between the church and the community, and therefore much goodwill to value and build upon. The challenge now is to capitalise on St John's strengths and realise the potential for further numerical and spiritual growth, especially in taking forward the work begun with young people, children and families, but also in ensuring that the church is at the heart of all that is good in Menston.

Our vision as the Diocese is about confident clergy equipping confident Christians to live and tell the good news of Jesus Christ so that churches grow and communities are transformed. For this post, we are seeking an enabling leader with a proven record of church growth, both numerically and spiritually, who has a joyful and confident faith. We want to appoint someone who loves Jesus and loves people, who can work with the congregation to be a church which worships in a variety of ways, continues to become more multigenerational, with ever more confident discipleship, and a strong and sustained engagement with the local community.

The part-time role as vicar is combined with the part-time role (17.5 hours / week) of Assistant Diocesan Director of Ordinands and Vocations (ADDOV) to make up a full post. The two roles both involve the ability to discern the gifts and potential of others and ways in which they can grow and be deployed in God's kingdom. There is also a need for personal resilience and excellent personal organisational skills in working the two roles, managing flexibly the peaks and troughs in the respective workloads, and creativity in order to maximise the potential synergy between them. The part-time nature of the parish role necessitates time to be focussed strategically. From the perspective of the Episcopal area we see four particular priorities for the new vicar:

- a) To sustain and develop the 'mixed ecology' of effective forms of mission, ministry and styles of worship to grow a wider diversity of ages in the church, and especially to reach out to families, young people and children in order to grow young people as Christians.
- b) To continue building up confident lay ministry from the congregation, both in depth and numbers, and enabling a good transition from long-term leaders who now have less capacity. This will include developing pathways for evangelism and discipleship, and increased lay leadership, encouraging individuals to grow in faith and use their gifts and talents. Hence, the incoming vicar will need excellent teaching, communication, team building and team leadership skills.
- c) To embrace the challenge of engaging new residents in the village, especially those living in new housing developments, such as those at Chevin Park, to welcome them into the community and to invite them to be part of God's plans for Menston.
- d) To develop and strengthen active and visible relationships within Menston in creative ways, both personally as an individual and also through the congregations. (S)he should be able to engage strategically with the life of the community, fostering excellent relationships (for example) with the local primary school, uniformed organisations, other churches and community organisations, as well as the many groups that use the Church Hall. I expect him/her to help St John's contribute with others to a shared vision both for Menston and for the place of the churches in Menston.

The Deanery of South Craven and Wharfedale has several parishes with a similar demographic to Menston where the church has the potential to be at the heart of the local community. Many of the churches in the deanery are experimenting with mixing new approaches to worship and mission alongside inherited patterns. The new incumbent will therefore find a group of creative and supportive colleagues in the Deanery chapter, all of whom will be familiar with the joys and challenges that each other faces. We expect the new post holder to work with a spirit of generosity in sharing wisdom and insights about ministry within the Deanery of South Craven and Wharfedale, across the Episcopal Area and (in their ADDOV role) across the Diocese.

+Toby Bradford, February 2024

We are seeking a vicar who is a strong faith-based leader, who shines with the joy of Jesus and a love for others. A person who can work with us to.....

- ... continue to grow a multigenerational congregation, by energising, inspiring and guiding us in diverse worship styles and evolving ministries, especially building on the successful foundations of our Zest and young people's services.
- ... provide compassionate pastoral care to nurture and cherish members in need at different stages of their faith journeys
- ... nurture and grow our ministry among children, maintaining engagement with them and growing their faith as they mature into young people and teenagers.
- ... engage and actively participate in the local community, liaising with the local schools, uniformed organisations, other community groups and the newer housing developments to revive the church as a central gathering place and spread the Gospel of Christ to all.
- ... embrace inclusion with all its many facets, journeying with us as we explore ways to welcome people of all ages, races, abilities, social backgrounds and sexualities whilst remaining empathetic and patient with those who find change hard.
- ... grow and deepen the faith and discipleship of both current and prospective church members, helping us to transition our lay ministry and leadership to a new generation of individuals as they are encouraged to use their God-given gifts and talents to support your vision for St. John's.
- ... embed a culture of prayer and reflection that can become parish-wide through inspirational Bible-based teaching.
- ... create a contemporary church that is central and essential to village life, demonstrating the relevance of Christianity to this fabulous parish.

STILL INTERESTED?

St. John's is "a symbol of Christian faith, past and present."
Village resident

Read on to learn more about our parish.



The Parish

This consists of Menston village, which has recently expanded following the addition of 180 new properties on two significant housing developments with a third development in its early stages, the hamlet of Burley Woodhead (40 homes) and major recent development, Chevin Park, on the site of the former High Royds Mental Hospital, which has around 800 mixed dwellings.

The parish boundary also encompasses neighbouring rural areas, including parts of Rombalds Moor. The current total population is around 7,000.

Menston is a very attractive village, conveniently located off the A65 with excellent rail links to Leeds (20 mins), Bradford (25 mins) and Ilkley (15 mins). London can also be reached within three hours. The bustling market town of Otley is 2 miles away. The village still has a rural feel, open country is in easy walking distance in any direction. There is even a feeder route passing through the village to the popular Dales Way - and the Lake District!



St. George's Day parade

The village has a selection of shops, including a post office, a Sainsbury's Local and a Nisa mini supermarket, two cafes, a library, four pubs, a doctor's surgery and a popular primary school. Kirklands Community Centre hosts a multitude of clubs and leisure activities and has been used by St. John's for outreach events. There is a thriving Scout and Guide Group as well as two nurseries and a pre-school. The village also hosts a variety of sporting clubs including cricket, bowls, junior football, badminton and tennis with a court in the park. Alongside St John's there is also a Methodist and a Roman Catholic Church.

Many people choose to live here because of the rail links to employment, art and culture in Leeds and Bradford and proximity to Ilkley and Harrogate. Families are attracted by the excellent schools and many children's activities whilst retired people appreciate the convenient amenities, such as easy access to shops, doctors surgery and chemist, as well as social events for the elderly and excellent pastoral care. There is a modern, purpose built Abbeyfield sheltered housing complex, which has great links with both local and church communities, and a brand new retirement community of 72 apartments that opened in 2023.



Outdoor nativity scene as part of a village trail

There is little ethnic diversity but quite a wide socioeconomic range and a strong feeling of community within the village. Village events are regular and well supported, providing great opportunities for church outreach to the community.

"St. John's is the centre of the village and has great kids' work going on"
A Parishioner

Coronation Weekend in the village.
St. John's led an outdoor family worship service on the stage.



The People and Worship

The Electoral Roll stands at 103. We have a Parish Administrator who works for 15 hours a week, spread over 3 days and we are supported by an Associate Priest (SSM), a Lay Minister and a wonderful team of dedicated volunteers. Together they are working as a great team during this interregnum period to enthusiastically keep St. John's going, running the Zest services and family activities, maintaining the pastoral care and upholding each other in faith.

"The Zest service offers an invitation to families and allows children to explore the love of God in a loud and creative way"
Church Member

Current Service Pattern

- 9.30 am Zest (an all-age worship session with a range of activities - average 22 adults and 12 children).
- 11.00 am Parish Eucharist, CW, (average 38, all adults).
- 6.00 pm Lay led service on Sunday evenings (average 6 adults, 5 children)
- 9.30 am CW Holy Communion on Thursdays (average 8 adults)

We have a regular organist supported by a retired organist, who play our 2-manual Binns organ. The liturgy and hymns are displayed on two screens, via power-point presentations. Our pew and lectern bibles are NRSV.



In 2023 there were 3 Baptisms, 1 Wedding, a confirmation service with 2 candidates and 8 funerals in church, whilst another 4 funerals were taken by the clergy at the crematorium. A volunteer verger is on duty on a rota basis for weddings and funerals. We already have 2 weddings booked for 2024.

Aside from regular worship and occasional offices we organise a number of fundraising and social activities for the whole community. In the past two years we have held quiz nights and suppers, concerts in church, village trails and regular craft & cake stalls. We take our Zest service to the Kirklands Centre for an extra community based all-age service at Easter, Harvest and Christmas. Our Eco-Church group works alongside Climate Action Menston to offer community recycling of blister packs and Christmas cards and a Christmas jumper exchange.



All-age services at Kirklands are "like the church has moved into the village for everyone"

A Church Member

We offer a warm welcome to newcomers and are working to be as inclusive as possible, but have several challenges that we need to explore if we are serious about being a fully inclusive church. We hope that the new incumbent might help us to explore these issues together.

We know that our position as the “Church on the Hill” means that it is difficult for elderly and infirm people to physically come to church, accessing either the many steps or the long slope. How do we become inclusive to those with physical needs? We know it is more than just putting in a ramp.

The variety of services we hold each week differ from each other in their worship style. They definitely serve the needs of those who come but there is a risk that we, accidentally, have created two congregations. How do we ensure that we are fully inclusive to people of all ages?



Menston is a very white community, socio-economically, but there are people of differing ethnicities in our neighbourhood. How do we ensure that as a whole congregation we are racially aware and inclusive?

Are we socially and economically inclusive in our mission giving as well as in our mission and outreach?

As a PCC we welcome and accept the guidance issued recently around LLF and the Prayers of Love and Faith. A small number of our congregation attended the Living in Love and Faith course in 2022, but for many it may not even be on their radar. We have people in the congregation for whom this really matters, we need loving guidance to accompany us on this part of the inclusion journey too.

This is a brief overview of what we think being a fully inclusive Church might mean, many of us are ready to explore that with an incumbent who is looking forward to this journey.

The congregation at St. John’s is very loyal, with members carrying out many tasks. As a result both church and churchyard are kept clean and in good order. The church is open during the day and a number of local people, visitors and walkers often call in for private prayer and reflection. The church garden is also a focal point for many people to stop and sit for a while. The main body of the churchyard is full and has recently been adopted by the council to assist in the general upkeep but the gardens continue to be lovingly tended by the volunteer gardening team.



“It is a beautiful, tranquil space, both inside and outside the church.”
A visitor



Preparing the Parish magazine

The Parish Administrator prepares weekly Parish Notes, the powerpoint for worship and keeps the website updated.

A team of volunteers produces the Parish Magazine (distribution 250) which is printed monthly in-house and distributed around the parish by volunteers.

A pastoral care team, led by 2 coordinators, ensures that visits to the sick or needy are made and church members are also active in village initiatives such as Menston Cares, who visit the housebound and arrange trips out, and a memory club for carers and those with dementia.

Other church groups/rotas include:

- Sacristans, Flower Guild
- Sidespersons, Offertory, Coffee
- Lesson Readers, Intercessions
- Church cleaning, Churchyard maintenance
- Zest & Core craft planning
- *ad hoc* social and fundraising
- Eco-church - Silver Award in 2023
- Outreach



Fabulous floristry



Tending the Eco Church vegetables



Serving mulled wine after the Carol Service

"A valuable place for older people and families both religiously and socially"
A Village Resident

Finance

In 2023, there were 82 regular givers, giving £16.42 per week on average, 77% of that amount was gift-aided. A very successful stewardship campaign was held in September 2014 followed by a review pre-Covid. We have recently joined the Parish Giving Scheme and we hope to migrate the majority of our regular givers to this scheme during 2024 and to revive our stewardship campaign following advice from the Diocesan Stewardship Team.

Along with the fundraising events mentioned above, this income has enabled us to replace the whole of the church roof, at a cost of £217,000 in 2022, and to maintain the church in good order, although there are always jobs to be done in a building that is over 150 years old. The roof project was a fantastic community achievement but unfortunately did have a negative impact on our ability to pay our diocesan share in full for 2021 - 2023. Our hope going forward is to refocus our fundraising efforts to enable us to meet the ever increasing costs of running the church and be able to pay our share. Our budget for 2024 allows for us to pay our Diocesan share in full and meet our expenditure predictions.

Last year we gave a total of £5,396.45 to charity as part of our outreach work, the chosen charities were agreed by means of a congregational button-voting system. We aim to support a local, national and international charity in this way, each year; for 2024 the charities voted-for in 2023 were WaterAid (International charity), SHELTER (National charity) and Behind Closed Doors (local charity).



"The church is a welcoming place where I can explore and nurture my relationship with God"

PCC Member

Church Buildings

The church was built in 1871 and is a well maintained and attractive building on a prominent hilltop in the heart of the village conservation area. The traditional pews were all made by 'Mouseman', Robert Thompson of Kilburn. The north aisle was extended in 1971 and includes the Lady Chapel, clergy vestry, parish office and a toilet. The roof was completely reslated in 2022 and the heating system functions efficiently. We have audio visual equipment with two retracting screens, which are used each week for worship.



A Zest discussion group in the Parish Room

The Parish Room, situated to the rear of the church, was built in the 1970s and extensively renovated in 2000. It consists of one large room with a room divider, modern kitchen and toilets. The room is used weekly by toddler groups, a Scout troop and Cub pack and for church functions and meetings, it is also available to hire for parties etc., although this needs renewed promotion following the "Covid years".

"St. John's is a home for our Scouts"
Scout Leader

Our challenges

We have an obvious demographic imbalance within the church community as at present around 80% of the congregation are over 70 and female. Like many Churches and community groups there is at least one missing generation of "young to middle aged".



We do have a number of families who attend Zest and we have a youth group "The Den", who are currently working together with other local churches. However, the village has seen a significant amount of housing development over the past few years which continues. We have not actively targeted this growth so, consequently, the village has seen a significant increase in population that has not been reflected by an increase in our congregation.

We need to support the existing, mostly elderly, congregation whilst reaching out to potential new members and making the Church relevant to their busy lives.

Menston is definitely not a backwater, rather it is a growing, evolving and vibrant village community. We are seeking a priest who will help us to flex and adapt to achieve a modern church that is central and necessary, someone who can reveal the relevance of Christianity to a modern and diverse parish community.

What we can offer

We believe that this post offers a great opportunity for a candidate with a strong vision, energy and purpose who can energise, motivate and inspire the existing congregation as well as enlarge it by reaching out to the whole community, which shows great potential for growth.

The congregation, in return, will offer their loyalty, talents, hard work and faith to make sure the vision becomes a reality. The strong team of wardens, backed by a PCC that represents all areas of church life, are keen to support the new incumbent in their role. The lay leadership, that has become more active during the interregnum, will grow and evolve with the right guidance and, alongside our enthusiastic volunteer teams, would love to serve as Jesus-inspired disciples to make the role of vicar at St. John's a rewarding and happy one.

The Vicarage

Our vicarage is well situated, only 200m from the church. It is a four bedroom, detached family home with a low maintenance garden, the main area facing south.

It has a separate study accessed from the hall ensuring a private work area away from the family home. There is a double garage and off street parking.



The diocese is doing some work to the vicarage during the vacancy to improve its energy/thermal performance so that it better meets the Church's drive to zero carbon and provides living conditions to a modern standard



"I like the sense of community and the diversity of worship. It is a challenge at times but always rewarding."
Church Warden

Useful links:

[Our website](#)

[Welcome to Yorkshire](#)

Village websites:

- [Official](#)
- [Menston village facebook group](#) - need to register
- [Menston Community Association](#)
- [Menston Primary School](#)

Local area websites:

- Ilkley:
 - [Literature Festival](#)
 - [Art Trail](#)
- [Leeds](#)
- [Bradford](#)
- [Saltaire heritage centre](#)



"Services are lively, friendly and well attended"
A Visitor

Terms of Appointment and Accommodation

The role of part-time incumbent of Menston is being combined with that of a part-time Assistant Diocesan Director of Ordinands and Vocations post to make a full-time appointment. The incumbency part of the appointment will be made under Common Tenure.

Provision of the house includes water rates and Council Tax. All expenses are paid. Removal costs and a resettlement grant are available.

There are six weeks of holiday per annum plus Bank Holidays (or time off *in lieu*) and a full day off each week.

Participation in annual Ministerial Development Review and in-service training is required and an annual retreat is strongly encouraged.

A satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure from the DBS will be required.

The Diocese of Leeds

The Diocese of Leeds came into being at Easter 2014 and is one of the largest dioceses in the country. The diocese comprises five Episcopal Areas, covering an area of around 2,425 square miles and a population of 2,642,400 people. This large geographical spread covers the major cities of Bradford, Leeds and Wakefield; the large industrial and post-industrial towns of Halifax, Huddersfield and Dewsbury; the market towns of Harrogate, Skipton, Ripon, Richmond and Wetherby; and the deeply rural area of the Yorkshire Dales. The whole of life is here, along with all the richness, diversity and complexities of a changing world.

The diocese is dissected by major motorways (M1, A1M, M62) and major trunk roads (such as the A650, A59), making road and rail communications good. Access to airports is also good, with Leeds-Bradford in easy reach and Manchester only an hour away.

The diocese is unique in having three cathedrals; Bradford, Ripon and Wakefield. The Deans of the Cathedrals work together to provide key diocesan services. Each Episcopal area is coterminous with an Archdeaconry and is served by a suffragan Bishop.

In this diocese, there is a vision with three core objectives:

Confident Christians: Encouraging personal spiritual renewal with the aim of producing clergy and laity who are confident in God and in the Gospel.

Growing Churches: Numerically, spiritually and in their mission to the wider world.

Transforming communities: For the better, through our partnership with other churches and faith communities, as well as government and third sector agencies.

This vision is embedded into the Diocesan Strategy and Goals:



Our goals

- 1 Thriving as a distinctive diocese whose culture is shaped by a shared vision and values
- 2 Re-Imagining ministry
- 3 Nurturing lay discipleship
- 4 Building leadership pathways
- 5 Growing young people as Christians

Is God calling you to this post?

To arrange a visit or conversation, please contact: Archdeacon of Bradford, Ven. Dr. Andy Jolley, andy.jolley@leeds.anglican.org, 0113 353 0290; 07973 458403

or

Parish Representatives:

Hilary Feathers (warden1@stjohnmenston.org.uk)

David Mercer (warden2@stjohnmenston.org.uk)

For more information about the Assistant Diocesan Director of Ordinands and Vocations role, please contact: Revd Andrew Norman, andrew.norman@leeds.anglican.org

Application packs are available from Carmel Dylak: carmel.dylak@leeds.anglican.org (01274 407471) or via the website: <http://leeds.anglican.org/vacancies-bradford>

Closing Date: Send completed application forms to Carmel by midnight on 21st April.

Interviews will be held on 16th May. For candidates who come from outside the Diocese there will be a further meeting with the Diocesan Bishop prior to a final offer of the post.

Application is via Pathways. There will also be a link from the Diocesan website to the Pathways application process. If you need help with this please ring Carmel on 0113 353 0290

