



APRIL 2025

# Priest-in-Charge

St Peter's parish, Belper

**Full-time, permanent stipendiary**

# Our Parish Mission Statement is

***“Jesus at the Centre – transforming our community”***

The PCC promotes this vision and is committed to: enabling people to grow in discipleship through worship and teaching; to be active in supporting the community both local and worldwide; and allowing people of all races, gender, learning level, sexuality to be active participants.

The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the Parish and makes suggestions on how the services at our three churches can involve the many groups that live within the Parish. We wish to continue and expand on this and be witnesses to the Good News of Jesus throughout Belper for everyone.

## **The key things we need our Priest-in-Charge to focus on are:**

- To continue to grow the churches, reaching out to more people and making new disciples
- To nurture a rich variety of church experience and worship tradition across the churches
- To review and refresh the mechanisms and provision that support church members in deepening their faith
- To develop the ministry, mission and community partnerships already taking place
- To develop and deliver new initiatives and partnerships in response to identified needs and missional opportunities
- To train and invest in developing those currently working with children and young people actively recruiting new volunteers
- To maintain and further develop strong relationships with schools, children and youth organisations
- To explore with the diocese the possibility of forming a Growing Faith hub in Belper
- To explore with St John's CofE School the possibility of forming a new worshipping community
- To support St Swithun's in becoming sustainable into the future
- To consider how St Peter's can support other churches in environmental awareness and action



## The Venerable Nicky Fenton

### Archdeacon of Derbyshire Peak and Dales

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I am delighted that you are interested in finding out more about this exciting post. We are looking for an enthusiastic priest with a pastoral heart and passion for maximising missional opportunities in this market town.

We are praying for someone who will love people, recognise and seize opportunities, engage creatively and missionally, sustain existing church life, develop lay ministries and form new partnerships aiming in all things to bring new people to faith.

There is significant potential for mission building on the work with schools, existing relationships with children and families, and the number of events and activities currently serving local residents.

As part of a future Diocesan Funding Bid, we are expecting that there will be a Growing Faith hub and potentially a FLOURISH community forming in Belper.

My hope is that the good practice that has seen many people coming to faith and growing in discipleship within these churches can be spread more widely across the deanery and can support, resource and inspire other churches in their evangelism, discipleship and mission.

We are seeking a leader who can inspire others to use their gifts and work in partnership to transform lives through growing church and building community. Together we are committed to deepening relationships with God, serving our local contexts, challenging injustice and making new disciples. These churches have the potential to be real trail blazers in our desire to prioritise growing younger, being greener, and becoming more diverse.

You will find a willingness and energy to look outward, to work in partnership with others and an aspiration to grow the churches through generous faith, courageous hope, and life-giving love. You will find supportive engagement from retired clergy and laity and team working will be of fundamental importance.

So do read on and if you are wondering whether this might be where God is calling you, please contact me and request an informal conversation so I can answer any questions and we can begin exploring the possibility together.

*Nicky Fenton*

**The Ven Nicky Fenton**

Archdeacon of Derbyshire Peak and Dales

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Archdeacon's Welcome

## **Revd James Hughes**

Area Dean of Dove and Derwent Deanery

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As this profile shows, St Peter's Belper, with St Mark's and St Swithun's offers an exciting opportunity to engage in ministry in a vibrant market town, to bring fresh energy and ideas to a church community.

We are a numerically small, mutually supportive deanery operating across varied geographical and social situations, but with a firm deanery commitment to explore what mission means in the 21st century. There are plenty of opportunities for exploring what we can do together, and the successful candidate is assured of our support.

### **Revd Dr James Hughes**

Area Dean of Dove and Derwent Deanery

Area Dean's Welcome

Situated within the heart of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site and on the fringe of the Peak District, St Peter's Parish has a population of approximately 18,000, within the vibrant, historic and growing market town of Belper. It's rich industrial heritage and strong sense of community make it a desirable place to both work and live. Belper's high street has been rated amongst the best in the country ranking tenth best in 2024 and twice crowned winner of the Great British High Street Awards (most recently in 2019). The town boasts a plethora of independent boutiques, charity shops, restaurants, cafes, bars, supermarkets, dentists, doctors and vets. It has an independent cinema, leisure centre and swimming pool and thriving football, cricket, tennis and rugby clubs.

Monthly and annual events featuring on the town's calendar include the Farmers Market, Belper Youth Club, Belper Goes Green, Belper Arts Trail, Pride in Belper, Belper Food Festival, Belper in Bloom, live music throughout summer in the River Gardens bandstand, Woollen Woods presents, Remembrance Service in the Memorial Gardens, Christmas Lights switch on and Christmas Market.

There is one high school, five primary schools and several nurseries and private childcare facilities within the town. St John's CofE Primary School is linked to St Peter's Parish, which you can read more about later in the profile.





The 2023 Census statistics are shown in the table below:

Parish	Population in Parish	IMD Score	Age 0-4	Age 5-19	Age 20-29	Age 30-44	Age 45-69	Age 70+
Belper St Peter	17,256	11.6	4.4	15.6	10	17.3	36.5	16.1

Historically Belper has been predominantly white (97.2%), Christian in outlook (46.4%) and there are no other major religious centres in the town, though there are Unitarians, Jehovah's Witnesses and a Spiritualist Church. 46.7% of the population in Belper report having no religion. In recent years there has been an increase in ethnic diversity in the town which is welcomed.

Within the town there are strong visible links between charities and churches. Churches Together in Belper, of which St Peter's Parish is an active member, work closely with local initiatives that benefit the community.

St Peter's Parish is made up of three churches; St Peter's, St Mark's and St Swithun's, all located in Belper, Derbyshire which sits within the deanery of Dove and Derwent in the archdeaconry of Derbyshire Peak and Dales, Diocese of Derby. The parish has a distinct range of theological perspectives which are valued and respected. St Peter's Parish is predominantly open evangelical. Each church has its own identity with healthy and viable congregations.

There is a strong Parochial Church Council (PCC) made up of members of each of the three churches, proportionate to their congregation size. The parish also has 6 representatives on the deanery synod and each church has a The Local Council (TLC) which is made up of a small, committed group of representatives from that church, who have designated authority from the PCC to make local decisions. TLC meetings are held bi-monthly, are well attended, documented and report to the PCC.

The parish enjoys joining together for social events including a parish weekend away every other year, regular PCC away days and a flourishing parish social committee who organise various events.



## Church Membership

2024	St Swithun's	St Mark's	St Peter's	Total
USAA	15	35	65	115
USCA	0	3	5	8
Worshipping community size	33	125	262	420
Baptisms	0	3	10	13
Marriages	0	0	5	5
Funerals	1	5	26	32

We have two Parish Wardens who are supported by volunteers who act as deputy wardens, sides people and welcomers in each of the three churches. We have a committed Parish Ministry Team of nine retired clergy with Permission to Officiate and five licensed lay ministers, three of whom have been recently licensed. The Ministry Team are supported by other lay volunteers, including local chaplains and pastoral care team from within the church. The team regularly run teaching sessions including Lent groups, Alpha courses, Puzzling Questions, weekly bible study and offer local schools the opportunity to experience church, during Pentecost, Easter etc.

## Parish Office

The parish office is located in St Peter's Church and open Monday to Friday 9am – 3pm. It is staffed by two part time administrators and supported by Church Watch volunteers who help welcome visitors and support the administrators. The administrators are responsible for DBS administration, bookings for weddings, funerals, baptisms and confirmation and the submission of regulatory data.



# Pattern of Worship

Church	1st Sunday	2nd Sunday	3rd Sunday	4th Sunday	5th Sunday
St Peter's (10am) Music by the worship band and church organist  Sunday Club for Children and young people  Regreshments after the service	Morning Worship (and baptisms)	Holy Communion	Morning Worship (in relaxed style)	Holy Communion	Holy Communion
St Mark's (10am) Music by the worship band once or twice a month.  Sunday Club for children and young people.  Refreshments after the service	Holy Communion	Morning Worship	Morning Worship	Morning Worship	Morning Worship
St Swithun's (11am) Refreshments before the service	Morning Worship	Morning Worship	Holy Communion	Morning Worship	Morning Worship
St Swithun's (9.30am) Refreshments before the service	Holy Communion 1st Wednesday of the month				
Messy Church *Saturday		St Swithun's*		St Mark's*	
Little Church ^Wednesday (term time)	St Peter's^	St Peter's^	St Peter's ^	St Peter's^	St Peter's ^



# Finance

The 2023 financial status of the parish is as follows, further broken down into the three churches and the shared PCC:

Year 2023	Parish total	PCC	St Peter's	St Mark's	St Swithun's
<b>Common Fund Asked</b>	£78,695	£0	£49,950	£18,163	£10,582
<b>Common Fund Paid</b>	£78,695	£0	£49,950	£18,163	£10,582
<b>Total Income</b>	£298,359	£94,076	£129,753	£47,823	£26,707
<b>Total Spend</b>	£233,990	£19,822	£128,819	£48,621	£26,728
<b>Restricted Funds</b>	£81,588	£70,524	£11,126	£0	(£620)
<b>General Funds</b>	£41,336	(£31)	£20,520	£7,092	£13,755
<b>Designated Funds</b>	£21,912	£16,816	£2,910	£2,186	£0

Each church, and the PCC, has its own bank account and the general fund of each church is restricted to that church. However, temporary assistance has been offered to St Mark's through a loan from St Peter's 2019-2021, and to St Swithun's through the other churches taking on some of its Parish Expenses allocation in 2022 and 2023. The three churches in the Parish work together and prioritise 100% Common Fund payments.

The church is strongly supported with donations through the Parish Giving Scheme, gift aided direct debits and contactless card machine payments and has paid its full Common Fund, even throughout the covid years.

Income for 2023 includes £70,524 from sale of land that is now held for purposes laid out in a PCC minute dated 18 September 2018.

As well as reserves detailed above, the fixed asset of St Mark's House is held by the Parish with a book value of £265,000. This is let through an agent at market rates. A further asset is a car park that is let under long-term contract to Belper Town Council, with income designated for youth work. The car park has a nil book asset value.

An important part of our ministry is that 10% of general fund donations is given each year to charities agreed by the TLC/PCC. Charities have included Hope for Belper, Belper Community Cottage, The Blue Box, Air Ambulance Derbyshire, Mission Aviation Fellowship, Smiles, St Crispin's Home in Pune and Open Doors. Our churches are also important donation points for the Belper Food Bank and Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity.

There is a wide range of groups available within the parish, offering activities for those aged 0-99+. A summary of each is found below.

## Little Church

Little Church is a parent and toddler group for 0–4 year-olds and their parents, grandparents or carers. We meet at St Peter's every Wednesday morning in term time from 10am to 12 noon. During the session there are opportunities for play, singing, stories, prayer, worship, craft and refreshments. We have great fun acting out some of the bible stories and it's a delight seeing the response from the children – and adults too!

## Messy Church

Messy Church is a twice monthly event held in St Swithun's and St Mark's, for families across the parish to come together to enjoy learning about God through craft activities, games and stories and by eating a meal together with friends.

The number of attendees varies considerably from month to month across both churches – averaging between 6 - 20 children plus adults and helpers

## Young People's Fellowship (YPF)

The aims of YPF are to provide a safe, accepting and fun environment where young people from our church and beyond can feel comfortable to be themselves, make meaningful friendships and develop their relationship with God.

We meet regularly throughout the year every Friday during school term times in St Peter's. Our usual evening programme includes games alongside a bible based teaching session with time for tuck shop and chats thrown in. Recent special events included the annual Christmas party with a bouncy castle, Bonfire night fireworks, Good Friday Walk to Black Rocks, bowling, a glass making workshop and residential at The Peak centre, Edale.

It is encouraging to see our numbers stay in the high teens each week with the young people inviting their school friends to come and join the fun. It is a genuine privilege to spend time together, creating community, discovering more about faith and watching friendships flourish.





## Holiday at Home

Holiday at Home is primarily for over 60s who may not have the opportunity to go on holiday but is by no means exclusive.

A team of enthusiastic helpers plan and deliver a day of church-based activities and an outing during a week in August with similar days at Christmas and Easter. The summer event is 2 days, one church based and one outing. Most of the original team are still the driving force though most are older than many of the 'guests'.

We are thrilled that around half of the participants are not church attenders, many are coffee morning contacts or have heard about H@H through church friends. There is a strong Christian theme running through the activities and a short reflection.

## Prayer Chain

The prayer chain uses Google Groups to offer rapid prayer support for individuals and families in need, as well as for specific organisations, events and emergencies as they arise.

At its heart are the words of Jesus: "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them" (Matthew 18:20); we know that when prayer is requested, Jesus is the living link joining the members of the prayer chain together, creating a web of prayer to support that person or need. GDPR and safeguarding protocols are followed.

Going forward, we would like to see more people joining the group, a means of involving people who do not have access to email and ways for members to pray for each other and to pray together.

## Widow's Might

We have no formal list of members, but a regular group forms a core which welcomes widows. There are very few months when we are not joined by at least one new widow. We meet regularly from 10.00 am - 12.00 on the 2nd and 4th Thursday each month, in St Peter's.

In between the Thursday meetings all kinds of events are enjoyed by groups of various sizes, including trips to the theatre, well dressing events, pantomime, garden parties and meals out. Many of us don't drive, but that doesn't prevent anyone from joining in the activities.



## Social Committee

The Parish Social Committee is a recent development and was set up to encourage social activity across the whole parish. Over the years there have been a variety of events put on which were open to all three congregations but tended to be organised by each church without reference to what was happening elsewhere. We wanted to avoid diary clashes and build on the experiences of our parish weekends away where the fellowship was a vital aspect of community.

So far, a Quiz night and a St Peter's Parish Has Talent event have been held, with a Parish Harvest Supper planned for Autumn 2025. The Social Committee also now has oversight of the St Peter's Concert programme where we hold a variety of events from tribute bands to classical concerts and even Christian Comedy nights. As well as opportunities for missional conversations, these events provide additional funds for our parish mission of Jesus at the Centre – transforming our community.



## Churches Together in Belper

St Peter's is an active member of Churches Together in Belper (CTiB), an ecumenical group of all the Christian churches in Belper who aim to promote the Word of God throughout the town. They organise the Town Carol Service held in the main street and the Memorial Gardens, which is attended by several hundred people. Leaflets are given out providing details of services taking place over Christmas in the town. At the switching on of the town's Christmas lights, CTiB give out knitted angels or stars made by the congregations of the churches in the town. Each gift has a Christian message attached. Recently a Hymns and Pimms event was held organised by CTiB. At Easter, CTiB display the Stations of the Cross in the River Gardens staffed by members of congregations from all the churches.

## Chaplaincy Derbyshire

The parish supports the work of the Derbyshire Chaplaincy Service and a number of our congregation volunteer as workplace chaplains in our schools, shops, hospitals and emergency services.

## Civic services

St Peter's is a large space and has enjoyed hosting civic services in the town for St George's Day and Remembrance Day where we welcome uniformed organisations across all age ranges within the town.

## Walk of witness

On Good Friday a walk of witness lead by a big cross takes place, starting from the Methodist Church and finishing with a service in St Peter's. It is well supported and another opportunity to spread the Gospel message about Jesus. The parish has also hosted a Passion Play written and performed by local people. The Belper Passion does not take place each year so that it retains its uniqueness and special meaning. The Belper Passion has received coverage on regional TV news and other media platforms and is something we would like to continue offering.







St Peter's is the largest of the 3 churches in the parish and the mother church, also known as the parish church for Belper.

Our main service takes place on a Sunday morning and attracts an average attendance of 65-80 adults. We have a small regular Sunday club but are eager to grow as we attract more families to our church community. Services alternate to encompass the various traditions found at St Peter's including Holy Communion, Morning Worship and a Relaxed Worship service which replaced an All-Age Worship.

St Peter's is a very busy and lively building with always something going on, whether bible study, coffee mornings, Little Church, games afternoon, gardening group, Holiday at Home, the craft group, worship group, or the Young Peoples' Fellowship (YPF) to name but a few.

We enjoy a mix of traditional and modern worship music styles with our magnificent Holt organ along with a talented worship group which can often be heard joining forces. We try to provide for the different traditions or musical preferences within each service and when it would assist our worship, we are happy to use video materials to facilitate good praise.



St Peter's has a good reputation for making all feel welcome and we are striving to become an inclusive church in its broadest terms, welcoming all people in Jesus' name. Like many churches, St Peter's has a committed team of volunteers who support the activities both in the church and outside in the community, be that pastoral visiting, carol singing in local care homes or knitting stars to give away at Christmas, to name just a few. We are blessed to have a good team of retired clergy and Licensed Lay Minsters, willing and able to support the running of services and the occasional offices.

The church building is referred to as a Waterloo church, and as such is of particular interest to the Historical Churches Society, being one of just two of its type left operational within the whole of the Midlands area. The church has just celebrated its 200th anniversary and, overall, is considered through the quinquennial inspections to be in good condition.

It has 8 bells which are regularly rung most Sundays by our dedicated team along with many visiting bellringers from across the district and further afield. They will often provide the bells for weddings and have regularly undertaken  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$  and full Peels on 'high days, holidays and major festivals.

Our main Sunday service is live streamed via our YouTube channel which attracts a small regular audience on the day and significantly more viewing during the following week. We have also offered live streaming for weddings and funerals where relatives have not been able to attend the service in person.

The clergy tend not to robe for services however there is a feel for this to return in some way, especially for the Holy Communion Services.

Financially, St Peter's is in a good place, and we have a variety of ways the congregation can give on a regular basis, through the Parish Giving Scheme, standing order, electronic card readers or the Sunday collection plate. St Peter's holds regular fund-raising activities from afternoon teas, the winter fair, to pop and classical concerts, which contribute to the maintenance and upkeep of the building but also enables us to contribute to the Parish finances so we can tithe to charities and good causes approved by the PCC.





## St Peter's Sunday Club

St Peter's Sunday Club offers a space for our younger demographic (1-16 years) to grow in discipleship. It has around 11 regular members, of which an average six attend weekly. Sunday club welcomes children of all abilities and is growing in its confidence in support for those children with neurodiversity and other additional needs.

Members of Sunday Club are encouraged to join our Young People's Fellowship when they reach the age of 12 years old, by which time they have built strong bonds with one another and the wider church community. Baptism services often see an increase in the number attending on Sundays due to visiting children and young people.

Sunday Club takes place in the West End of the church during the usual Sunday service. It is led by a good number of church volunteers. Each session has one leader and one or two helpers who deliver materials from Roots which link to the content being delivered in the main service. While Roots is helpful, we have recently been reviewing whether this is the best resource to use that will equip our young people to be engaged and grow each week in their faith.

Sunday Club is run by volunteers who are wonderful and caring but there has not been a focus on developing their skills at leading children's work through regular training. This is an area that we recognise needs attention, coordination and leadership to ensure its integration with the work of YPF and what happens in church for the parents and carers.

Historically Sunday Club has been strong in numbers and pre-covid ran 'seasonal parties' such as Light Party or Pentecost celebration, which we would like to see restarted when resources allow. There is a strong commitment from the parish to support and resource the development of our engagement with children and young people with a desire to grow in this area of evangelism within our parish.



## St Peter's Worship Group

The people of St Peter's love to sing God's praises at the tops of their voices. They are led in this by a music team which consists of organist/pianist, guitar, bass guitar, drummer and vocalists, plus, occasionally, trumpet. At most services we aim for a balance between traditional hymns, accompanied on our historic but well-maintained organ, and modern worship songs led by our team. Our repertoire ranges from Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley through to Matt Redman, Chris Tomlin, Hillsong, Bethel, Taizé, and many more.

## St Peter's Community Garden Group

St Peter's Community Gardening Group started in 2018 and has always included a mix of both church members and non-members from our local community. We are a group of friendly volunteers who enjoy being outside gardening and meet every Wednesday from 2.00 -4.30 pm. If the weather is too wet, hot or cold to garden we still gather inside the church to play board games. We grow vegetables, fruit and herbs in raised beds and manage areas of the churchyard for wildlife stopping for tea and homemade cake towards the end of the afternoon. We love to welcome new people of any age or ability and over the years have had volunteers ranging from home educated young people to others who have retired from regular employment.

## St Peter's Eco Group

St Peter's Eco Church journey began in 2017 when the PCC agreed to the church being part of the A Rocha project. As a church we worked hard to look at all aspects of church life and were thrilled to be the 62nd church in the country to be awarded a Gold Eco Award.

We now have an Eco Group of eight members who encourage both church members and our wider Belper Community to think about the way we live and look after our environment. So far this year 2025, we have organised a New Year Plant Hunt, had a fundraising event for A Rocha while looking afresh at the life of Noah's family and the flood. In February we had a display of green hearts in the churchyard made by our local community as part of the Climate Coalition's Show the Love month. We held a Clothes Swap and are working with Fleet Arts to be part of a Community Arts exhibition called 'Blooming Marvellous' celebrating Spring/Earth at the Ilkon Gallery, Ilkeston from March to April.







St Mark's has been a place of worship since 1891 and opened as a mission church. It is situated at the crossroads in the village of Openwoodgate on the outskirts of Belper, within the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage site buffer zone. The crossroads is nestled between Heage and Bargate, Belper and Kilburn.

The premises was extended at a later date to include a large hall, kitchen and toilets. All of the buildings have been renovated to meet accessibility standards including a wet room toilet, modern kitchen off the hall and a kitchenette at the back of the church. The dais of the church has been extended to provide space for performances and the pews have been replaced with chairs providing flexibility for the church, vestry and hall to be used on a regular basis by church groups and hired out to community groups. The buildings, gardens and car park are regularly maintained as confirmed by the Quinquennial report in 2023. Pottery School is our nearest Primary School with Belper High School being the local Secondary school, both of which we would like to initiate more involvement with.

## Worship Style

The weekly congregational attendance is between 35-45 out of 50-55 regular Sunday worshippers and is a growing congregation. Sunday Club is available for children during morning services and is held in the vestry. Attendance is generally between 0 and 4 and is an area we are looking to develop. While we lack young families on a Sunday morning, we do have a healthy attendance at Messy Church.

We hold lively Sunday morning services which are two-way interactive with questions and answers in the starter section, led by either retired clergy or one of three lay readers. This type of worship style is an important part of St Marks' identity. We hold a Communion service once a month. All the service material is delivered by PowerPoint presentations, to include a variety of media such as pictures, photographs, videos and music backing videos.

## Music

We are fortunate that a variety of hymns and modern songs are accompanied by a pianist on an electric organ or digital piano, once a month. More recently a guitarist and clarinettist duo have joined the musical ensemble. Music videos and backing tracks are also used when musicians are not available. All hymns and songs are displayed on the projector screen, with the full CCLI SongSelect database to choose from. Two singers take the lead, irrespective of the type of accompaniment. The congregation are very willing to try new songs and fully participate in singing and any accompanying actions.

**Prayer group** is a valuable part of church life which takes place once a week and is attended by between 10 to 13 people, focusing on prayers for the local community, the church and its vision within the community. The prayers are preceded by hymns and songs and the subjects of prayers are added to the noticeboard each week to share with all the church community.

**Home groups** meet once a fortnight. There are currently 3 groups, with a 4th group being considered and encompass around  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the regular church attendees. These groups explore in more depth the previous week's Sunday theme and are an important and vital part of our spiritual and social growth.

**Prams and First Shoes** is a play group run by helpers from St Mark's for children from birth to 3 years. It is attended by around 7 children each week along with their parents or grand-parents. There are toys, jigsaws and books available to play with, along with refreshments, and provides an important first introduction to a church environment for both children and adults.



**Crafting for Charity** is run by church members and currently has around 8 members. The members knit squares that are then made into blankets and donated to Operation Orphans. The group are also involved in knitting angels as part of the Churches Together in Belper Christmas outreach. Refreshments are available and social events are organized within this group.

**Film Club** runs from September to March presenting children's films once a month along with cinema style snacks of hot dogs and popcorn. It is attended by between 15 - 20 children along with their responsible adult/s and is growing in popularity.

**Coffee bring and buy mornings** take place once a month and are attended by around 40 people, from all three of the churches within the parish and from the local community. This group is growing in popularity and of course refreshments and cake are available.

**TinyTalk** is a baby signing language group that meets twice a week in the church. It develops a way of communicating with babies before they can speak and continues to develop toddler's communication skills through fun activities and song.

**B.E.A.R.S** Breastfeeding support across Amber Valley meet in the church once a week. They work within the community to assist new mothers with breastfeeding and to provide a social group. They are funded by the NHS Charitable Trust.

**Ad hoc concerts** are held within the church such as an ABBA concert and more recently Comedians and Carols. There is a social committee which organises both fundraising events and social events. The church and vestry are the designated polling station for two electoral wards, one in Belper South and one in Denby.

## Hall Regular Groups

A children's Pre-School hires the hall five days a week providing 24 places for children aged 2 to school age. The church has an excellent working relationship with the Pre-school organisers with a Christian story time being provided in church once a month by a retired clergy, graduation ceremonies and a Christian nativity being performed in church, along with the use of a large external play area.

Openwoodgate Rainbows, Brownies, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts all use the hall on a weekly basis, forming a good, long standing relationship with the church. They attend and take part within the church's Remembrance Service. Other local packs use the hall for occasional sleepovers and the church for Faith badge activities led by St Mark's lay readers.

Primrose Art Club use the hall twice a week and work with children aged 4 to 13 years in exploring creativity using different art medias.

The hall is also booked on an adhoc basis for private parties and a Council Youth group will be commencing in May 2025.

St Mark's House, a property owned jointly by St Peter's Parish and the Derby Diocesan Board of Finance, is situated next door to the church and is rented out to tenants via a management company. The rental income is added to Parish funds.





St Swithun's Church was opened in 1913 and has always been part of St Peter's Parish, although for many years it was staffed by The Church Army. The church and its surrounding garden are owned by the Hanson Trust, income from which for many years has paid for all major repairs and the insurance of the church.

Knowing there was a need for a church in the Cow Hill district of Belper, Mrs Elizabeth Hanson paid for the church, a church hall and a house for a priest as a memorial to her late husband who was a partner in one of Belper's large hosiery manufacturers. She left the church further money in her will. Sale of the church hall and house in the early 2000s increased the assets of the Trust. The church garden is not licenced for burials and is maintained as a wildlife friendly asset for the local community. St Swithun's is well placed in the local community and car parking is usually easy for those from farther afield.

There are no longer pews in the church. Instead, it has 100 comfortable chairs of which 50 – 60 are usually set out, but with additional stacking chairs 130 can be accommodated. This means there is a very flexible space entirely suitable for a range of concerts and other functions.

The church pipe organ is well maintained and is generally considered excellent for its size. An electronic organ/piano is also installed.

The congregation is mostly elderly and has been in decline, although we are fully solvent and paying our way in the parish and would love to see growth. This will need to be a key factor to ensure sustainability in the future.

We have a good relationship with Herbert Strutt Primary School whose headteacher is a committed Christian. She brings the whole school (in two groups) to St Swithun's during Advent.

We provide a varied series of events throughout the year. Most evening events are musical. Events during the day are much more varied: our monthly 9.30am Communion service is followed by a coffee morning aimed at the local community and although those attending are mostly not regular church attenders, they have the parish magazine and regularly support our events and some special services. Other daytime events include book and bric-a-brac sales and afternoon teas with live entertainment. A substantial amount is raised for church funds. The collection at our carol service has traditionally gone to charity and for the last few years has supported the local food bank, as have the harvest gifts.

The afternoon fellowship group meets monthly with attendance not restricted to church members. The group enjoys a variety of activities starting with prayer and singing, followed by quizzes, word games and the occasional speaker. Meetings usually finish with tea and cakes and lively conversation. The group goes out for a meal together about twice a year.



# St John's CofE Primary School

Mr. Roger Averis, Headteacher writes...

St John's CE (VC) Primary School and Nursery is a large school of just over 400 pupils in the market town of Belper, Derbyshire. Our vision is encapsulated with this statement, as we strive to be "A Christian Environment for Growing, Learning and Fun". We achieve this with the support of staff, parents, governors, St Peter's church and a thriving community as we work together.

- We are a family – we care for each other's wellbeing; encourage each other; celebrate and have fun together and help each other along. We show respect for people, and for the world.
- We are a safe place – where children are valued and taught to appreciate diversity and value each other.
- We are a hard-working place – children are encouraged to aim high and to achieve the best they can through innovative, inspirational, and high-quality teaching.
- We are a welcoming place – we live, work, and pray in partnership with our families, our local church, and the wider community.

Our values are recognised by parents who added the following comments in the recent parental survey.

- "The positivity and kindness values have been recognised and brought home"
- "A very inviting school, lots of effort in activities to make it fun and make the children happy. Staff are always happy to help and listen"

Our links with St Peter's church are wide. Our children, parents and staff visit the church and lead services several times a year. Our popular, children led services such as the annual Easter service, and professionally led events such as iSingPOP concerts successfully fill St Peter's. Staff and parishioners from St Peter's support and visit St John's on a regular basis supporting us in ways such as governorship, delivery of the curriculum, taking collective worship and reading stories to the nursery children.

One of our most successful links that has been developed through work with school, the Diocese and St Peter's has been our developed link and friendship with Scott Lane School in Kolkata, India. We have regularly had staff travel to India to work at Scott Lane since 2019. Our children learn about the lives of their friends in Kolkata and what life is like for a pavement child in Kolkata compared to a child at St John's in Belper.

We would like our new vicar to continue to celebrate the established links between St Peter's church and St John's school. These are not limited to, but include, welcoming us at St Peter's as we worship in child led services and being a familiar face at St John's, leading collective worship, supporting in classrooms and working as St Peter's ex-officio foundation governor on our governing board. We are also forward looking and would welcome new ideas and ways in which we could build on our school and church links.





**The vicarage is a large, detached property with well-maintained grounds. It is situated opposite the east end of St Peter's boundary on Chesterfield Road. The property has been well maintained and there is scheduled maintenance, set to be completed during the vacancy.**

## **How to Apply**

Thank you for reading this profile. We hope that you have been encouraged by what you have read. If you discern that God is calling you to serve among us here in Belper we very much look forward to hearing from you.

If you have any specific questions or would value a pre-application conversation, then please contact the Archdeacon:  
Ven. Nicky Fenton [nicky.fenton@derby.anglican.org](mailto:nicky.fenton@derby.anglican.org)

The Diocese of Derby is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All post holders and volunteers are expected to share this commitment. Click [here](#) for further information on our commitment to safeguarding. All appointments are subject to acceptable pre-appointment checks, including a satisfactory Enhanced DBS Check.

Your data is processed in line with our Privacy Notice.

Be assured you are held in our prayers as you discern whether God might be calling you to this role.

## **Appendix: Finance Report**

[Profile Appendix\\_St Peters Parish annual-report-complete.pdf](#)