

## 1. Summary of the profile

St Paul's is a lively Anglican Church in the suburb of Penketh in West Warrington.

Our aim at St Paul's is to provide all sorts of settings in which local people of all ages can access and grow in the Christian faith.

We want a Vicar that leads from the front - listens and gives guidance.

We want a Vicar who is Spirit filled, God led, with passionate interpersonal skills. Organised, ideally with experience of other workplaces and with practical skills. A person of integrity who can delegate and trust others to share in the work. A team player who can follow in the footsteps of Jesus but be wise enough to seek guidance from fellow travellers on the way!

We want a vicar who will not try to do everything 'solo and brilliantly' - but will work with us to motivate and organise us to care for and support one another in both life and ministry.

We're a church that knows the meaning of hard work - in church activities and within our community centre at The Oaks.

We're a church that's getting used to being part of a Team, learning to work more closely with 4 other congregations that do things differently to us. We believe Team is good and are determined to encourage other parts of the Team with what we have learnt over the years, and to learn from and receive from others in the Team where we are not as healthy as we need to be.

We are a congregation that seeks fruitfulness knowing that all we do must proceed from our individual and corporate encounters with God.

We put a high value on our community and interface with them at the Oaks Centre, which we have bought and maintain for their good.

We join the other congregations in our area by being visible 'on the square' for Easter, Christmas and community barbecues.

Food and music play a large part in our ethos.

Our vision is to see the Holy Spirit working so obviously in God's people here that He can't help but be noticed by those we come into contact with, being:

Further information about the church can be located on our website:

*"The heart of God at the heart of the community"*

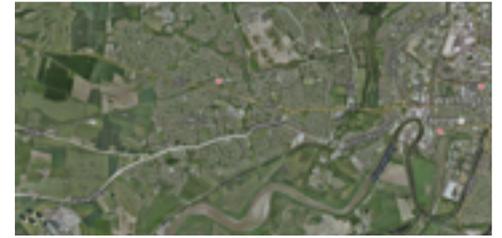
[www.stpaulspenketh.org.uk](http://www.stpaulspenketh.org.uk)





### 3. About the parish

Penketh is a civil parish and suburb of Warrington, Cheshire (the 4th largest town in England, on size of budget). It is located about 3 miles (4.8 km) west of Warrington town centre, and has a population of 8,543 over 3,624 dwellings (2011 Census). 77% of Penketh stated their religion as Christian in the 2011 Census - 6,619 people.



Penketh is conveniently situated close to Warrington's motorway network (M6 and M62) therefore Liverpool, Manchester and Chester are all within easy reach. The suburb has many local amenities including a village square, library, swimming baths, hall, youth centre, and medical surgery. There are playing fields and children's facilities at Greystone Heath and Wythenshawe recreation grounds.

Before WW2 there were upward of 30 farms in Penketh - though this number is now much reduced (to 3 working farms) it is still possible to feel the rural aspect of the area - the River Mersey marks the southern boundary of the parish, with plenty of footpaths and cycle-paths (including the Trans-Pennine Cycle Path) as alternatives to using the car.

Most of the houses in Penketh are privately owned with just one whole road designed for council-owned property. The area is predominantly white British, with (a few) original Penketh people, many from Liverpool who moved this way in the 1970s and, more recently, people moving from further afield to be close to their work.

There are 4 good quality Junior Schools in the parish (2 community schools and 2 RC) and a large High School - however, Penketh is the area of Warrington with the highest percentage of people over the age of 65 (29%).

Warrington as a town has a population of over 202,000. With over 100 churches across the town, it also boasts a theatre and arts centre, several leisure centres, ten-pin bowling, cinema, karting and driving range, plus a theme park! The town also has a Challenge Cup winning rugby league club, Warrington Wolves, and a football team in Division One North - Warrington Town - who recently got through to the second round in the FA Cup.



## 4. About the parish

### 4.1. The church and its people

We're a warm family church, with two four-generation families

*“The heart of God at the heart of the community”*



and a number of three generation families in attendance. Our congregation stands alongside one another in good times and in bad, support one another in times of need and celebrates times of triumph.

We're not perfect - we know sometimes that our warmth towards one another isn't always translated to new people to the church as we catch up with one another over coffee. Our work in the Oaks and in our community groups helps us to work on this - but we're not all natural evangelists! Our present Vicar has been good at making the connections for new people into our congregation - we sometimes need some encouragement to do this ourselves though.

There were 109 on the Electoral Roll 2014, with a current average Sunday attendance of 70 (13 at 9:00am Holy Communion) and 60-80 at the 'main' 10:30am Service, including 11 children 0-10 and 6 teenagers.

The average age of the congregation is higher than we would want it to be, and certainly higher than when the current vicar arrived 33 years ago, but with five families with young children as part of St Paul's, we are hoping they will provide the "tipping-point" for us to become again a younger church - with children, young people, young marrieds, single people, retired people, grandparents, great-grandparents even - ordinary people of all ages with exciting stories of the Holy Spirit doing things in their sphere of influence.



#### 4.1.1. Our Services

Each of the 9:00am Services is Common Worship Holy Communion, with the "main" 10:30am Services being Cafe Church (1st Sunday), Worship & Teaching (2nd & 4th Sundays), All-Age HC (3rd Sunday), All-Inclusive (5th Sunday).

Sunday Gang is held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays for ages 3-10, with ages 11-16 in Pathfinders.

We place high value on an extended time of sung worship at the main Service. This is led by a team of worship leaders. Additionally, there is normally the opportunity for personal prayer for healing after each of the main Services - 2 or 3 people drawn from a pool of 10 are on a rota for this.



### 4.1.2. Finances

Over the years members have shown great generosity, in 2014:

Sunday giving	£69,641
New Church building	£54,947

We follow the practice of tithing the Sunday giving and each month a tenth of the giving that month is sent to one of the 12 national and international missionary societies/organisations as agreed by the PCC at the beginning of the year. Societies like TEAR FUND, Global Care, Jews for Jesus, Church Urban Fund, Christian Vision for Men, Open Doors, the Leprosy Mission, and CARE, have received our support. We have ourselves found these links helpful through information, prayer and the occasional visiting speaker.

Additionally we support the Briers family, ex-St Paul's members who consider us as their "sending church" with a donation each month to their work in South Africa at the People's Church, Worcester.

The Parish Share presently stands at £48,000 pa, which accounts for around 75% of our monthly expenditure. It is paid in full but this can lead us to make tough decisions about how to spend what is left of cash coming in.

### 4.1.3. Church Leadership and Organisation

St Paul's has three representatives and the Vicar on the Team Council, which meets monthly.

Over the years the vicar has led the church through the PCC and the Core Team, a smaller group appointed by the vicar and ratified by the PCC. Additionally, the Team Rector is ex-officio Chair and a voting member of the PCC.

The PCC, Core Team and Team Council currently meet monthly, with the opportunity of different sub-groups meeting and reporting to the PCC.

Any member of the congregation can be part of a sub-group, with there being a sub-group (currently there are 6) for many of our concerns as a congregation: Worship / children and youth / social events/ pastoral care and evangelistic outreach through The Oaks / communication / small groups. Some of these may well be subsumed into a Team sub-group for example teenagers, and for evangelism.

Another Leadership Team is The Sunday Team, when 8 or 9 (including our 2 lay readers) meet on a monthly basis to plan Sunday Services.

In addition to this, we have meetings of The Leaders Forum 3 times a year. The purpose of this is to bring together the 23 or so in the church with leadership responsibilities, enabling horizontal communication between leaders and encouraging younger members to aspire to leadership.

A Building Group has been established to plan and develop the current and future needs of the congregation. They meet regularly with the architects to talk through the plans of the proposed new building, and present these plans to the various diocesan committees.



A number of Cell groups meet with between 4 and 9 people on a weeknight (or weekday afternoon). Additionally there are many people in smaller prayer groups of 2s and 3s who meet on a regular basis.

A team of 3 organises a monthly Games evening for teenagers held at The Oaks.

Another team of 8 is responsible for the work with primary-aged children, 3s - 11s, and our quarterly Messy Church. The team working with the younger children is actively seeing that all things required are in place for our achieving *Child Friendly Church* award.

#### 4.1.4. The church and the community

We do not have many weddings at St Paul's (no more than 1 or 2 a year). The number of funerals has declined over the last 3 years from 17 a year to about 10, and our Baptism policy means that parents with no interest in further involvement with St Paul's tend to look elsewhere for Baptism (5 or 6 Thanksgiving & Blessings followed by 4 or 5 infant Baptisms per year).

There are exciting plans at Team level for more effective contact with baptism families and with couples planning on getting married.

There are post-funeral visits and an annual Bereavement Service.

Additionally, there is ongoing contact with families coming for Baptism through *Parents & Toddlers* at The Oaks.

Though the above may sound as though we are something of a "gathered church", St Paul's is committed to daily outreach through The Oaks.

Through this centre (a former school built in 1909), St Paul's has become a congregation increasingly involved with people in the area of Penketh.

#### 4.1.5. The Oaks

The Oaks employs a Centre Manager and 5 other part-time staff who complement the work of some 50 volunteers (by no means all as yet members of St Paul's).

Now our only community centre (and also the base for Sunday Services), The Oaks was opened in 2000 - the main activities (the Little Acorns nursery, the computer suite, day-care for clients with special needs, indoor bowls, French classes, sequence dancing etc.) revolve around the Old School Café that serves lunches on a daily basis. Further information can be found on the church website. The Centre Manager estimates a weekly "footfall" of 300+ users. The Centre is also for hire by the local community and has a busy schedule for this, with birthday parties, special interest groups and fitness classes hiring on a regular basis.

We are keen to establish missional communities: at The Oaks for the last 4 years there has been the monthly Café Sunday time with café style worship especially popular with people who do not relate too well with "inherited", traditional church.

As Sunday worship is currently held at The Oaks, the whole congregation now has the opportunity of experiencing the "worship-lite" style of Sunday Café on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month.

The weekly Mums and Toddlers (church on Monday afternoons, for the last 15 years and more) meet with a majority of non-church attenders.

Other groups held at the Oaks by Church members include the



fortnightly “Singing 4 Pleasure” group and the weekly “Knit & Natter”.

#### 4.1.6. Schools engagement

We have no church school in the parish but we have good links with the 2 Community Primary Schools (Stocks Lane and Penketh South), whilst good work at Penketh High is done by a staff member of Warrington Youth for Christ.

The Bible Society’s Open the Book programme happens weekly in one of the local community Junior Schools. The local head-teacher has welcomed a team of 5 (2 from St Paul’s, 2 from St Joseph’s (RC) and 1 from Penketh Methodist church) into school every Wednesday for *Open the Book* with 90 children from reception, Year 1 and Year 2.



#### 4.1.7. Engagement with the elderly

With the average age of our congregation, engagement with the elderly is important as we support our community and one another during the autumn of our years. Venues such as the Oaks hold tea dances, indoor bowling and singalongs to help grow networks for those feeling lonely and isolated.

There are 4 homes for the elderly in the parish which are visited by the churches in the parish. St Paul’s has a team that goes on a monthly basis to Heathside and The Mews.

A new development is due to open in 2015 very close to the Church building. Providing 54 apartments to those aged 55 and older, this is a further opportunity for community engagement.

#### 4.1.8. West Warrington Church



The 4 Anglican churches (St Paul’s, St Mary’s, St Philip’s and St James’) together with the Pioneer plant known as The Ford (planted in the new Urban Village of Chapelford built on the old Burtonwood Airbase) became a Team in May, 2014 and are known now as West Warrington Church.

The approach to developing Team is described in the document Team Ethos which should be read in conjunction with the individual Parish Profiles.

#### 4.1.9. Churches Together in Warrington West

There are 10 local churches in the Warrington West area (4 Anglican, 1 Pioneer mission plant (the Ford), 1 Roman Catholic (St Joseph’s), 1 Methodist (Penketh Methodist) with the LEP shared Anglican-Methodist at St Philip’s), 1 Elim Pentecostal (King’s), 1 Brethren (Jireh) and 1 AOG Pentecostal (Bethany).

These 10 churches make up the group known as Churches Together in Warrington West.

Representatives (up to 3) from each church meet 3 or 4 times a year to plan joint events. These include an open-air time together on Good Friday and some form of activity in Lent



## 4.2. The church and its buildings

We have currently vacated our Church building - deemed beyond its use-by date, with the last service held there on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2015. We are presently meeting at the Oaks.

Our architects from *Studio Plan A* have indicated the current building could be demolished in May 2015 and the new church building completed during 2016. This is subject to Diocesan and Council planning approval.

We require £750,000 for the new build, and we have presently raised 78% once the Manna House has completed. Along with fundraising activities we are actively applying for grants in line with the weekday uses of what is planned as a community\_church and will complement the excellent facilities provided at The Oaks.

The Oaks is a delightful Edwardian Junior School, opened in 1909 and re-opened by Bishop James Jones in 2000 as a community centre managed by St Paul's. It is in excellent shape as a building; currently, income of £73,000pa is just keeping up with expenditure.

The Manna House, our other Community building, is currently for sale - the painful decision was made that we can no longer staff 2 community centres, and the sale price of £175,000 will help us towards the cost of the new building. We are thankful to God for this building.



### 4.2.1. Vision for the new building

While the Oaks has been a successful venue for Church meetings since January 2015, it is not ideal and would not allow for the larger services we have held at the original Church building. Although the building is not the Church we view the new building as an essential part of meeting together for worship for our congregation as we grow and develop.



Members of St Paul's have been planning and raising funds for the new building for over 15 years. The new building is to be designed not only to meet the needs of the congregation but to complement and add to the existing work of the Oaks. The vision for the building includes requirements for:

- Whole church worship (all ages) for more than 80 people (limited at the Oaks)
- Christian conferences and team meetings (up to 150 people)
- Providing facilities that can be used by the Team and other Christian Organisations. Spaces to be designed for flexible usage and range of numbers
- Family meeting place
- Venue for affordable marriages and funerals with economical catering facilities (either brought in or provided by the Oaks Centre) - Meeting a need for less expensive events
- Conference/meeting/celebration venue (up to 150) for corporate events (Christian and non-Christian) - Providing a local venue for local groups and businesses, linked also to the catering venue at the Oaks if required
- Providing a prayer room and quiet sanctuary for people wanting to pray and needing to escape from troubling situations.

The cost of the new building is currently estimated at £700,000- £750,000. The plans, overseen and managed by an established Buildings Team, include:

- A Main Hall Space (accommodating a minimum of 120 seats). Full audio-visual facilities, suitable for conferences; Moveable raised area which can be variously configured; Sprung floor (suitable for dancing); The space will be used, but not limited to, worship services, local church activities, weddings & funerals, conferences, concerts & drama and exercise space.
- Entrance Foyer (Break-out area). Flexibility to combine with main space when increased capacity is required
- Two larger meeting rooms which are flexible in their usage (intended to be used for crèche, children / youth activities, designated prayer room, preparation areas for drama, break-out areas for conferences)
- Two small side rooms which are flexible in their usage (could be used for counselling, one-one prayer, vestry, interviews, mentoring, small business use). The side access door provides a more discreet/confidential entrance
- Office (central administration hub for St. Paul's and possibly the wider Team)
- Kitchenette (generally for tea & coffee making and for serving any brought in meals)
- Toilets, including Disabled Toilet
- Storage space



Furthermore, the plans have been drawn up to allow the potential for further expansion as we grow.

### 4.3. Plans for 2015

St Paul's challenges and opportunities over 2015 lie in the following:

- Maintenance and mission
  - Commitment to each other, commitment to bringing other people in (to Jesus) and a commitment to the local community. Building up the body of St Paul's
- Managing the introduction of a new Team Vicar
  - Ensuring he or she is supported, welcomed and that the relationship is mutually beneficial
- Building up the body of St Paul's
  - Using the Oaks for worship to act as a catalyst to grow the congregation
- Developing relationships with the other team churches
  - We want to see the Team working well, with the bottom line being Growing God's Kingdom in West Warrington



## 5. About the wider context

The vicar has been one of the Faith Representatives on the Board of Stronger Together West an initiative to make local government more effective at the local level.

There is a network of evangelical-charismatic church leaders in Warrington known as *Increase* which holds a monthly Friday lunchtime gathering for friendship, encouragement, communication and prayer. The name comes from the motto of Warrington, *Deus dat incrementum (1 Cor 3: 6) - God gives the increase.*

We will pay all clergy working expenses, we expect a Vicar to take proper holidays and days off and we will support them in their training (CPD), reading and personal development.

Given major changes in Team membership we are working with the Diocese to review the housing provision. Housing will either be in the current Vicarage, after refurbishment, or in a newly purchased property.



## 6. Other References

St Paul's Facebook page:	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/stpaulspenketh">https://www.facebook.com/groups/stpaulspenketh</a>
West Warrington Church Facebook page:	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/westwarringtonchurch">https://www.facebook.com/groups/westwarringtonchurch</a>
The Oaks Facebook page:	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/theoakspenketh">https://www.facebook.com/theoakspenketh</a>