

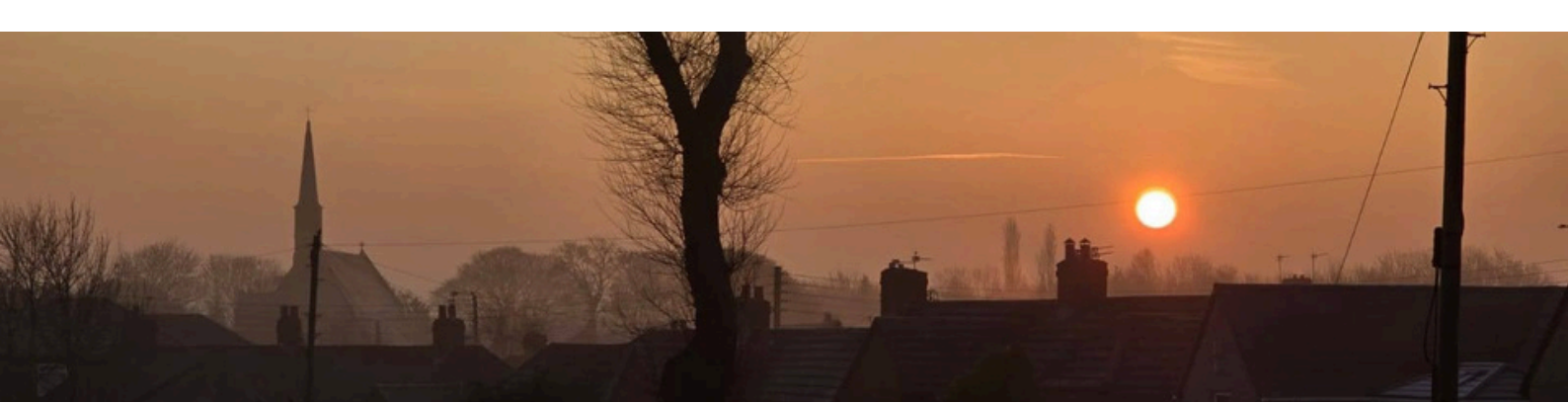


Parish Profile 2026



“This Church exists to be the people of God through faith in Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, worshipping God, making disciples and serving others.”

-St George's Mission Statement



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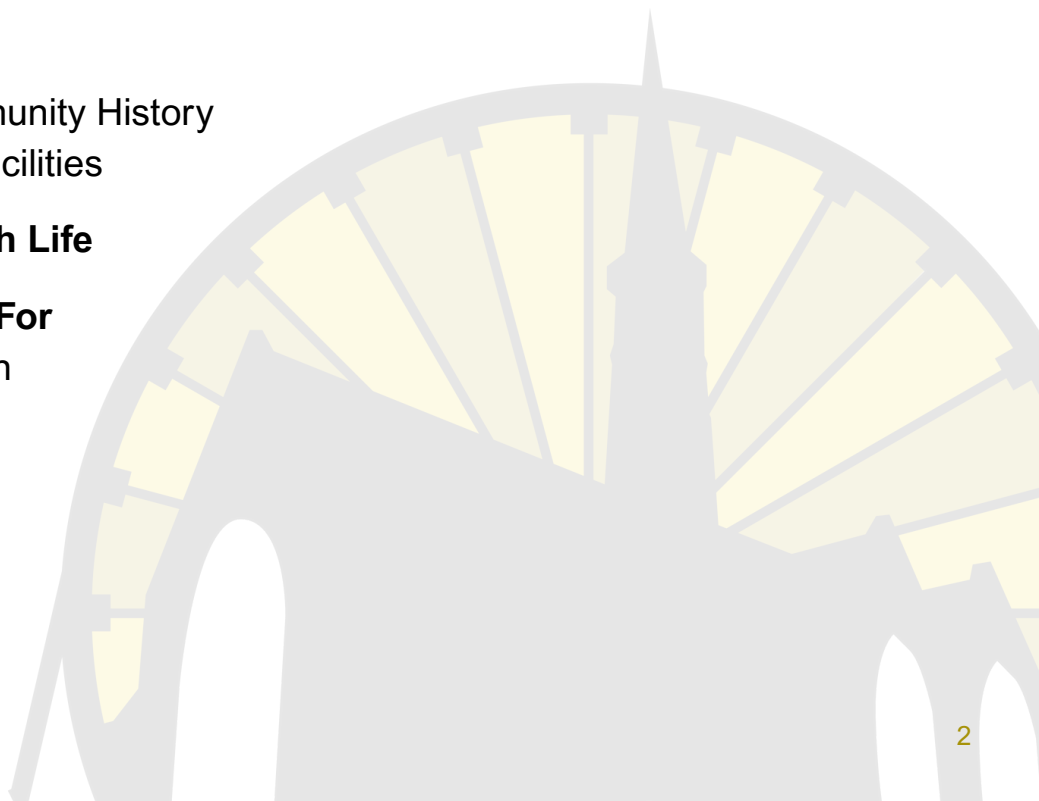
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Introduction and Welcome

We are entering a new era in the life of church with many exciting opportunities. Blessed to have a dedicated congregation with a multitude of gifts, both practical and spiritual, which are emerging and proving immensely beneficial to the life of the church.

The church has benefitted significantly from a more collaborative ministry; this will require nurturing as individuals from the congregation take on more leadership roles.

Our church is highly motivated to build on the good things that are happening, and keenly aware of the challenge to proclaim the gospel afresh in an ever-changing world.

Our ambition is to see new missional outreach planted through using our great resources such as The Table Café, we are keen to prioritise a working age population, in particular young families and youth, reaching out to all four communities that comprise the parish.

An exciting opportunity has arisen to work alongside the recently appointed Washington Youth Hub leader in developing opportunities for children and young people in all three Washington parishes.

Recognising that prayer is the bedrock of all ministries, we want to see regular targeted prayer as a collective activity not confined to church services.

We believe all the above will help us achieve our mission to bring people to God through faith in Jesus Christ.



Our Vision and Future

Mission and discipleship

Church has a real heart and commitment to our mission:

This Church exists to be the people of God through faith in Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, worshipping God, making disciples and serving others.

This vision continues to shape and inspire all that we do. We are blessed to have many connections within our community and have worked hard to create a welcoming and inclusive worshipping environment where newcomers quickly feel at home.

In recent months, we have been encouraged by tangible signs of growth, with around ten adults, including several of working age, and three or four children joining the congregation. Significantly, some of these individuals have found their way to the church without any prior connection, reflecting a growing visibility and openness within our community.

As we look to the future, we recognise an exciting opportunity to build on these foundations by helping more people explore and deepen their faith journey. A key priority for a new minister will be to develop outreach, evangelism and discipleship, equipping and encouraging the congregation to share their faith with confidence. We are grateful for the support of the Diocese in this area through guidance, training and group learning opportunities, which will help us continue to grow in both mission and discipleship.

We are also aware of the need to explore new ways of doing ministry that will be appropriate and accessible for those people in our community who do not yet attend church. A new minister should be someone who can lead in this way, identifying and pioneering new opportunities and fresh ways of connecting people to faith, and looking to establish new services and ministries as a way of achieving this.



Our Vision and Future

The Future and Priorities

Encouraged by recent growth, we are eager to build on the strong foundation of our committed and mission-focused congregation, nurturing new opportunities for service, discipleship and outreach for the future.

We have identified several key priorities to take us forward in mission enabling us to respond faithfully and creatively to the changing needs of our community.

Priorities

- Ministry to working aged people. We are conscious that much of our offer happens during the day and is not conducive to people at work who make up a significant proportion of the population.
- Pathways to growth. We wish to help our many contacts to discover their own pathway to faith, to become disciples of Jesus.
- Investing in the growth of our people through learning together, developing small group work appropriate to people's needs at different stages of their Christian journey.
- Working collaboratively by recognising the many gifts God has blessed us with within the congregation, working with them and encouraging them to flourish.
- Build the Kingdom, not just the church.
- Using the opportunities the physical resources present, particularly the newly built annexe, as a springboard for outreach.
- Nurturing the growing sense of a united focused community.
- Encourage collective prayer.



Worship and Spiritual Life

Worship

St George's is an informal evangelical church with many members from free church, non-conformist, Brethren and catholic backgrounds.

Sunday morning 10am service attracts over 50 worshipers including children for a combination of communion, family service and praise worship. Power point is used during services to reach the congregation, reducing print costs and demonstrating our commit to environmental sustainability. A small Sunday school with dedicated leaders meets twice a month. Music is led by a small enthusiastic worship group. Fellowship over coffee after the service is a key aspect of the service, ministry of prayer is offered once a month.

Our Sunday afternoon service at 4pm is a quieter, more reflective gathering, typically attended by around 25 people of mixed ages, although the congregation is generally older, and the service alternates between communion and Evening Prayer.

Our Wednesday morning service at 9.30am is a said service without music, attended by around 12 or more people, and alternates between Holy Communion and Morning Prayer.



For all services, we maintain a rota of welcomers, readers, those leading intercessions and preachers. We are blessed to have several committed lay members who regularly lead services, and preach occasionally, alongside the support of retired clergy.

Christmas is a special time in the life of our church. Christmas cards are delivered throughout the parish as a way of connecting with our community, and our most significant outreach event is Carols in the Courtyard, to which the whole community is warmly invited. We also celebrate the season with our popular Christmas Eve service, Carols by Candlelight, which is always a well-attended and much-loved community occasion.

Worship and Spiritual Life

Occasional Offices

While the number of occasional offices has reduced over the years, this has created greater opportunities to focus on ministry, discipleship, and mission within our parish and wider community.

For baptisms, we encourage families to attend church regularly before arranging a service, helping them to build a connection with the church community and explore faith more deeply. Adult baptisms are particularly joyful occasions and are warmly celebrated as part of our regular worship.

Although weddings are now infrequent, we remain delighted to support couples who choose to begin their married life within the church.

Funeral services have become less common as many are now arranged directly through funeral providers. However, we continue to value the opportunity to offer pastoral support, prayer, and care to bereaved families whenever we are invited to do so.



Ministry and Community Engagement

Pastoral Care

Pastoral care has been at the heart of St George's Church for over 35 years. In recent years we have invested significantly in rebuilding and developing this ministry, and today our thriving Pastoral Team consists of 21 committed volunteers who serve both the church and the wider community. The team meets regularly to review its work, share learning and develop new initiatives. All members are DBS checked and safeguarding trained.

Over the last five years, we have expanded our pastoral ministry considerably. This has included establishing a Bereavement Support Group, delivering our own Exploring Pastoral Care training programme, and providing specialist training to equip volunteers to support those experiencing mental health challenges, addiction and the effects of trauma.

We have developed strong partnerships within the local community, including collaboration with Washington MIND to deliver training such as Youth Mental Health First Aid and A Life Worth Living, a suicide prevention course. Looking ahead, we are developing new areas of ministry focused on supporting older people, particularly those living with dementia, through spiritual care and wellbeing initiatives.

Our pastoral work extends beyond the church walls. We welcome residents from St George's care home to church services and our popular community gatherings, Cuppa, Cake & Company. We are also committed to working alongside Age UK to help older members of our congregation remain connected with their faith and church family.

The church serves as a collection point for the Washington Community Food Project, supporting local families and individuals in need.

The pastoral team also organises a programme of day trips and social activities, creating opportunities for friendship and belonging across both the congregation and wider community.

Alongside regular pastoral support, we hold annual services including a Memorial Service of Thanksgiving and a Service of Healing. Practical support is offered through Home Communion, prayers for the sick, a prayer chain, welcome cards for newcomers, and support groups that help members build relationships and care for one another. St Georges values people deeply and we hope to continue our investment in pastoral ministry as a key part of our mission.



Ministry and Community Engagement

Young People



We are encouraged by the opportunities we have to engage with children and young people both within the church and across the wider community.

A small but committed youth group meets weekly, led by a former Methodist minister together with members of our congregation. This provides a valued space for young people to build relationships, explore faith and grow together.

Looking ahead, we are excited to be part of a partnership with two neighbouring Anglican churches in appointing a dedicated Youth Worker. This new role, due to begin in autumn 2026, will focus on building relationships and engaging with young people in local secondary schools across Washington, creating new opportunities for outreach and discipleship.

Our Sunday School meets twice each month and regularly welcomes around ten children. It is particularly encouraging that many of these children also attend our other morning services, helping them feel fully included as part of the wider church family.

There are three schools within the parish. We maintain links with the two primary schools, Rickleton and Fatfield, and continue to explore opportunities to strengthen these relationships. Plus, Harry Watts Academy, a specialist school serving young people from across the city, within our parish.

We also run a weekly toddler group which is well attended and has a steady waiting list. This is a lively group that, again, provides outreach links into the community.



Ministry and Community Engagement

The Table Café

Two years ago, saw the completion of our café “The Table” and community rooms.
Our café manager works closely with the pastoral team and church family to help develop more opportunities to serve the church and community.

These currently include:

Craft & Chatter, a group supporting each other in fellowship and friendship working on projects making Baby caps, blankets etc for hospitals and other needs.

After school meals – 7 weeks before the school summer holidays, to feed families.

Summer Youth – to run one week during the school holidays, providing activities and food.

Dementia support group – looking into training and finance.

Community garden – starting to set up a team.

Training in June – Access to Action Strengthening Community Participation.

Working with the Diocese, with prayer and guidance.



Our People

Church leadership team

The running of the church is managed by two church wardens, treasurer, and a pastoral assistant plus 20 Parochial Church Council (PCC) members.

A paid part time Parish Administrator, is a very welcoming presence at the church. Full time Community Café Manager, a committed Christian with real sense of mission and community involvement.

During the vacancy, we have been greatly blessed by the support of two active retired clergy, a married couple who have generously shared in leading worship and preaching.

Finance

The church has gone through a very challenging period of uncertainty due to issues relating to the building of a new annexe. However, after months of working through issues the church can now move forward and concentrate on mission priorities.

Financial oversight is robust, with reports provided to the PCC as a standing item on the agenda. To ensure transparency and accountability scrutiny of income and expenditure is provided by an external independent financial examiner. Monthly reports are presented to both the Standing Committee and PCC, supplemented by a quarterly monitoring report from the Treasurer and the annual Trustees' Report. As ratified by the PCC the church intends to pay the agreed amount of Parish Share for this financial year.

10% of giving goes to support three mission partners.

The church employs two members of staff, a Parish Administrator and a manager of The Table Café.

The church has a clear reserves policy: “....to maintain free reserves that cover 3 months of fixed costs to ensure essential bills can be paid....”

Safeguarding

The church is committed to the Church of England Safeguarding Policy. The church has a safeguarding lead and a deputy safeguarding lead both PCC members. The church is linked to the Diocese safeguarding hub and works closely with the Diocesan safeguarding team.

Our People

Assets and people

As of the 29th March 2026 there are 109 people on the Electoral Roll. Many living real faith born out of lively Christian commitment. Most Sundays we welcome about 80 worshipers across the two services. Over the last few months, we have witnessed an increasing number of working age people and children, indicating congregational growth. The growth we have seen cannot be attributed to any one activity, but seems to be evidence of the moving of God's Spirit

We are blessed to have many people involved in different areas of the church's life bringing their skills and gifts. As evidenced by some excellent skilled groups committed to maintaining the church buildings and infrastructure, these include the church building group, interior maintenance and the grounds team, plus our very able IT 'geeks' managing Wi-Fi, website and social media.

The introduction of The Table Café has attracted more people of all ages who regularly volunteer their time.

For working aged people, a Men's group is regularly attended by around 25 men once a month, about 50% of whom are non-church members. A Ladies group is in early stages of establishment with several events already organized such as bowling and a BBQ.

We are supported by the Diocese with training, with seven of our members taking part in 'leading small groups' training to help their confidence and skills development.





About St George's **Heritage and Community History**



St George's Church was opened in 1876 after Lord Lambton, Earl of Durham, donated land in Harraton to provide a place of worship for those living on his estate. For almost a century, the life of the church changed little. It now serves the communities of Harraton, Rickleton, Fatfield and Mount Pleasant. Fatfield is separated from the parish by a dual carriageway, while Mount Pleasant lies across the River Wear, demonstrating the need for a wider missional strategy to effectively reach these communities.

Like many churches, St George's enjoyed strong attendance until the social changes of the 1960s and beyond. During the 1980s, significant changes took place within the Church of England and at St George's. An evangelical vicar was appointed, service times and music were refreshed, and there was a renewed emphasis on reaching out and serving the local community. The congregation grew rapidly, with more than 300 people attending three regular Sunday services. To support this growth, a Pastoral Assistant was appointed and a part-time Parish Administrator employed.

As the church developed, a mission statement was created which continues to guide the parish today. To accommodate expanding ministry and outreach, additional rooms were constructed above the worship space, providing facilities for Sunday groups, youth work, Alpha courses, meetings and other activities. With space at a premium, a satellite congregation was established at Washington Arts Centre, holding Sunday morning services there until the two congregations reunited in worship around 2008.

A new Vicar arrived in 2013 with a vision to further strengthen the church's connection with the community through the construction of an annexe incorporating a café, kitchen and flexible meeting space. Following years of fundraising and planning, the new annexe opened, with a Christmas service held in the courtyard in 2024.

After more than twelve years of faithful ministry, the Vicar moved to a new parish in August 2025.

Today, St George's remains firmly committed to its mission of bringing people to the Christian faith and serving the local community. The growing pastoral team supports those who are housebound, while the church and annexe host a wide range of community groups and activities, including keep-fit classes, a ukulele group, toddlers, youth work, film club, Bible study groups, Lent courses, and social events.

We are encouraged by steady congregational growth and remain ambitious in our desire to serve our communities. Above all, we rejoice whenever people choose to explore faith and join us in worship.



About St George's Buildings and Facilities

St George's Church is a Victorian red brick building situated on a corner plot on the outskirts of Harraton village in Washington, Tyne and Wear and was consecrated in 1879.

The main church building consists of Nave, side chapel, vestry, foyer and further rooms on the first and second floors, built in 1987. The main nave and side chapel can seat approximately 140 persons. The original pews were removed during previous reordering and replaced with chairs; this enables the nave to be used for many functions simply by rearranging the chairs. At present the upstairs rooms are predominantly used for storage. But can and have been used for many church activities in the past.



The annexe is a new building and is the result of eight years of planning and construction and is a glass and cladding building providing a new front foyer and office on the North side and a community cafe plus meeting rooms on the South side with an open patio on the Western frontage.

There is an open graveyard on the East front, and a closed one covers the South and East sides.



Programme and Parish Life

What's on at St George's

The programme below gives a flavour of some of our regular activities that are all managed by volunteers.

Weekly programme

Café: Mon - Friday 9.30am - 2.30pm

Monday

Cuppa, cake and company
Bereavement support group



Tuesday

Toddlers
Ukelele group
Craft and Chatter



Wednesday

Communion/Morning prayer

Thursday

Active families - exercise class
Youth group



Friday

Cuppa cake and company

**St George's
Toddler Group**



Monthly/Bi monthly Programme

Prayers for the sick
Meet and Eat
Men's Hub
Ladies group
Mother's Union (meeting not held in church)
Film/book clubs both for youth and adults



Occasional series

Discussion groups (usually a series per quarter).

Who We Are Looking For

Person specification

We believe that the church is in a good place first in terms of people and secondly in terms of plans to build something permanent to worship God. We are looking for a minister who believes they can share and help us with that calling.

Someone with a proven sense of mission will give at least 50% of their time to reaching out to those outside the church, particularly those of working age.

A minister capable of building up structures, either themselves or with the help of others, to create pathways to faith and discipleship and learning and growth for all of us at whatever stage of our Christian Walk.

A people person who enjoys and is relaxed in others company.

A person willing to build on what we already have, a sense of continuity before and after their ministry.

Someone who will encourage people in their various skills and callings who has a real sense of the church being the body of Christ.

A person who will recognize their own strengths and weaknesses, use their strengths alongside others who have those gifts, and encourage others in developing confidence and gifts in areas of ministry where they have less experience.

A minister who is keen to work collaboratively with other churches in the town and the wider Diocese.

First and foremost, we are looking for a person with a living and active faith.

The Vicarage

The vicarage is situated in an estate approximately one mile from the Church. The ground floor is a large welcoming space with a generous kitchen and dining area which opens to a large conservatory, which in turn leads out into a wraparound garden. There is a dual aspect sitting room plus another room which can be used as a study or a dining room. Upstairs are four bedrooms, two of them with ensuite shower rooms, and one large shower/bathroom. The property benefits from a double garage. The house was built approximately 35 years ago and has been recently renovated and decorated.

Further Information

How to Apply

To enquire about this role please contact



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Archdeacon of Sunderland

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