

**St Mary Magdalene** is a traditional Anglican Catholic parish which aspires to be a welcoming and vibrant community dedicated to fostering a clear sense of vision and purpose a beacon of faith and hope embracing the diversity and spirit of our parishioners and wider community.



**Church Situation** we have a church building and attached hall. The area around the church consists of rows of smaller terraces, with a strong local identity, the large vicarage is adjacent to the church building, Our Sunday services usually has on average 24 people attending not including children but can be up to 32 , our electoral roll is 52. We are in close proximity to a large General hospital and a lot of staff live in the vicinity many from Africa,Asia or the Philippines some of which visit our Church from time to time and are made welcome being invited to a cup of tea and a

biscuit after the service. We are very closely situated to the local primary school who are keen to use the Church for Chris-tingle services. Opposite the Church is the RAOB club which in the past used to facilitate our social evenings and money raising events. The Church hall is widely used by the community for children's birthday parties, various classes, meetings as well as Church services ( a ethnic Pentecostal group use the Church hall to hold a service most Sunday afternoons). The church hall also has an "upper room" which is suitable for meetings and contains a suite of computer terminals that can be used for training purposes , such as safe guarding. The congregation is mainly white British other than visitors and are mostly over 50 years old , they are from various back grounds and most are retired. There are a few children that attend on a regular basis as their mothers a members of the congregation occasionally other children attend with their parents. The regular congregation is traditional and prefers sacramental worship. Our numbers have fallen over the years many very faithful and gifted people having aged and died , so that only a few people are left who are prepared to help "run" the Church. There is also a small cohort that only attend on a Sunday evening.

### **Our services**

During the vacancy with the help of associated and retired clergy we have maintained the following services , Solemn Mass on Sunday mornings , said Mass on Sunday evenings preceded by vespers and exposition of the blessed Sacrament. Mid week said Masses are held on Wednesday mornings and Thursday evenings Rosary is also said on Thursday evening prior to mass, ministry of healing is incorporated into the Thursday evening Mass once monthly and as required. Baptism services generally take place on Sunday afternoon, these are a regular occurrence but not weekly , funerals take place midweek and are more numerous in the winter months , weddings are also held at the Church but these are relatively rare.



## **Links with the Church of the Good Shepherd**

For over 20 years we shared the same Parish Priest/s with the Good Shepherd Church, which is a parish adjacent to us, we support each others special services, fund raising events and social occasions and maintain strong links with each other.

## **Bishops Priorities**

energising growth

The congregation and associated clergy have endeavoured to energise growth by maintaining a strong presence in the local community; by means of musical concerts, coffee mornings, Facebook, Local leaflet drops, advertising in local shops and Bingo, these events serve not only as a means of raising funds but to engage with the people who live on the doorstep. Pastorally we have maintained links with local organizations such as Diamond Hall primary school, School, Chris-tingle takes place over a period of a week and is attended by teachers, children and parents, RAOB club (Remembrance Sunday), Links to the local Nursing home St marks Nursing Home involving communion for the sick, bulletin drop and event advertising.

## **Caring for God's Creation**

In order to save costs, improve our carbon foot print and aid the environment we have installed a Hive heating system, use energy saving bulbs and introduced sensor lighting where appropriate.

## **Engaging with Children, Youth and Young Adults**

We have formed the Mini Mags group for younger children which functions as a Sunday school, and runs concurrently with the Sunday morning service, this takes place in the Church hall, the Children leave during the service and return in time to take part in the offering, young people are also encouraged to take part in serving at the Altar and to Join the Guild of Servers. For smaller Children we have a play area at the back of the Church. Until recently the local Brownies met in our Church Hall.

Our previous incumbent had strong links with the local Diamond Primary School, and this has been maintained in particular by the efforts of our assigned Church Army missionary, who is also ordained and has supported us very much with Ministry and pastoral visits.

### **Challenging Poverty**

Our parish is situated in Millfield which is listed as one of the most deprived areas of Sunderland, our parish of 3000 people is listed at 968<sup>th</sup> out of 12178, 1 being the most deprived parish in the country, all of our interactions with the parishioners have this in mind, from the cost of renting the hall for children's parties and free musical concerts which optional donation, as well as cheap cups of tea and sandwiches at our fund raisers. When we had an incumbent we had more scope to be involved with more direct action against poverty such as being involved in the Food bank enterprise and investigating partnership with the local Salvation Army Temple this is an area we are hoping to develop with the help of our New Parish Priest.

### **Mission**

Our main efforts during the 2 year vacancy has been to try and keep the service "running as usual" to some success, other than engaging with the public as outlined above we have not been involved in specifically targeted Mission work or outreach, though indirectly by use of leaflet drops, Face book, a revamped Website and advertising our services especially at Easter, Christmas time we are always encouraging people to attend. However we require leadership and direction to fulfil our potential for Mission.

### **Person Specification**

We seek someone who will share our vision for strengthening our structures, both spiritual and physical, who will demonstrate the love of God to all, especially the sick and needy, the young and children, providing pastoral support and being a visible presence to everyone in our communities, whether or not they acknowledge Christ.

### **Expected priorities of the new incumbent**

- Building on and broadening our tradition of sacramental worship, leading us to a deeper love of Christ.

- Getting us to be more engaged in the wider community rather than being inwardly "church" focused.
- Attracting families and younger people to worship.
- Working with the PCC to move the work of the church forward and encouraging those on the periphery of the congregation in their faith.



## Challenges

We have outstanding major roof work which we anticipate will require considerable funds: this includes the wholesale replacement of pitched roof coverings, replacement of broken cracked tiles to main roof pitches, repair of chimney and parapet walls as well as both flat roofs requiring additional, matching single ply covering to wall heads, the removal of damage causing Buddleia is an essential part of this. A schedule of works has been prepared by the architect and has been put out for tender for all of the above nevertheless we have not yet received a quote and the architect is presently re ordering the schedule of works to make easier to fulfil. Finding the funds will be challenging but we have a good track record of raising funds in the past as well as obtaining grants and are confident that we can meet this financial commitment.

