



Christ Church
Aughton



Parish Profile



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Welcome

We're thrilled that you're considering joining us. We are excited about where God will lead us on this next stage of our journey and who will travel there with us. This profile offers a glimpse into who we are, where we feel called to grow, and the community you might soon call home.

OUR MISSION:

Our focus is on sharing Jesus with everyone, starting right here in our community. It's a straightforward mission but one that calls for creativity, dedication, and faith.

WHO WE ARE

Standing proudly near Ormskirk, West Lancashire, Christ Church Aughton is home to a warm and welcoming Anglican community. With over 150 regular Sunday worshippers, we are a sociable, welcoming church that values

Biblical tradition and cherishes our sense of community. Our heritage is evangelical, and our hearts are open to people from all walks of life.

OUR ASPIRATIONS AND CHALLENGES

We long to see growth—both in numbers and in the depth of our discipleship. We seek a leader to

guide us in embracing God's vision for the future, fostering deeper trust and collective boldness.





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In this Profile you will find details of our prayerful aspirations for a new Vicar, insights into the kind of Church we are and what we do, an overview of the Parish, our work in the community and how we fit into the wider context.

WHAT WE ARE GOOD AT

- Hosting courses like Alpha and Hope Explored to help people explore faith.
- Interacting with the wider community through events at our Ministry Centre.
- Providing rich opportunities for spiritual growth through LYFE groups and seasonal courses.

- Supporting all ages, from toddlers to over-65s, with diverse activities.
- Offering a warm, hospitable welcome.

WHERE WE NEED HELP

- Attracting younger families and individuals.
- Improving communication and engagement across the board.
- Finding the balance between tradition and innovation as we grow.
- Strengthening participation in whole-church prayer and daily operations.
- Ensuring financial resilience for future ministry.

We're Praying for You

We have worked hard on the Profile, and we hope it paints a clear picture of **Christ Church Aughton**. More than anything, we are praying for the right person to step into this role and join us in sharing the hope and love of Jesus with the world. *Could that be you?*





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The Vicar we are Praying for

We are looking for a Vicar who will build on what we have already achieved, help us meet new challenges and move to the next phase of our journey. We envision a leader who:

- Possesses a strong personal faith and can teach effectively
- Values the Bible as the living heart of ministry and can relate it intelligently to contemporary life
- Inspires and empowers others while being approachable and down-to-earth
- Engages effectively with younger generations and can improve outreach
- Balances tradition with innovative ideas to guide us through Church's next chapter
- Is imaginative in identifying mission opportunities with other parishes, the Deanery and the Diocese
- Is open to exploring opportunities for new worshipping communities
- Can shape and communicate a strategic vision
- Has interests beyond church life.

While preparing this profile we sought input from our congregation and the wider community via surveys and discussion. Views expressed were broadly aligned with those of the PCC and are reflected in the above.

Comments indicated a desire for a dynamic leader who can balance traditional faith with modern outreach, inspire engagement across age groups, and manage the church effectively. The congregation would like a good listener, approachable, supportive, and having a sense of humour: someone who is 'one of us,' relatable, and grounded in real-life issues. We had fewer responses from the community but it was encouraging to see a desire for greater engagement.

Staff of **Aughton Christ Church C of E school** are keen to have a Vicar who will lead 'inspirational worship for the whole school and be innovative and joyful about this to engage the children'. The children's wish-list includes someone:

- To teach us about Jesus
- Being a great role model
- To teach us about God in a fun way
- To share beliefs of God through stories.





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About the Church

We are a warm, friendly and welcoming evangelical church with a congregation from a wide range of ages, backgrounds and different church traditions.

OUR HISTORY

As the foundation stone was laid on 28th March 1867, W. H. Boulton, the Vicar of Aughton, described the future Church as a 'house of prayer and praise' where 'very many souls, from generation to generation' would 'hear and receive the Gospel of Christ'. We are humble and thankful to be part of this long tradition. The Church, constructed from locally quarried stone in Gothic 'flowing decorated' style, was eventually consecrated in 1877, with the distinctive peal of eight bells installed the following year.

The original parish of Aughton was based around St Michael's, with Christ Church as a daughter church. In 1929, Christ Church Aughton became a Parish in its own right. The Rector of St

Michael's continues to be the patron of the Parish of Christ Church and has input into the appointment of new Vicars.

CLERGY OVER THE YEARS

Since becoming a separate parish in 1929, there have been five vicars at Christ Church:

Rev J P Hobson 1929–1956
Rev Gwynn Rhys 1957–1974
Rev Eric Bramhall 1975–1992
Canon Ross Moughtin 1992–2018
Rev Sarah O'Donoghue 2019–2024





What we do ...

Worship and Prayer

Sundays

● 9.00am Common Worship

Communion with robes. Lay folks often lead and preach at this service. The Congregation is around 60–80 each week with very faithful weekly attenders. The music is usually from the organ.

We serve refreshments in the Church between the two services.

● 10.45am Family Service

A service with provision for children and young people. Non-robed with lay leaders and preachers alongside clergy. Music is led by a Worship Group. There is no fixed liturgy, and Holy Communion is celebrated once a month. All Baptisms take place within this Service. The Congregation is usually between 70 - 120.

● Communion in the Ministry Centre

A monthly Holy Communion Service is held in the Ministry Centre prior to Luncheon Club; about 25 older people attend.

Occasional Offices

The numbers for these services are relatively low. In 2024 these comprised four Weddings and nine Funerals with no Confirmations.

Our People

To lead worship, we have an Associate Vicar (with a full-time job at Emmanuel Theological College), an active retired Vicar and a Lay Reader as well as four informal worship leaders and preachers.

There are three organists who play on a rota at the 9.00am service and we have a new very good digital pipe organ. There are several other gifted musicians, and we have a worship group that leads at every 10.45am service.

All Bible readings and intercessions are led by lay people and there are regular testimonies in both services. In addition, the Congregation has many strong, committed and gifted members doing all sorts of

ministries within the Church and in the community.

There is a team managing AV and sound during services, as well as livestreaming services on YouTube and managing the website.

Prayer Life of the Church

We have Parish prayer diary for daily use to fuel prayer for individuals, alongside an online and in person Morning Prayer. We also have a monthly whole Church prayer time on the first Monday of the month at 12 noon and 7.00pm alongside several prayer triplets. We are in the process of reinstating prayer ministry at our Sunday Services and after refresher training will have a new team.

Pastoral Care

There is a team of 30 trained Pastoral Visitors who are in contact with approximately 90 people on a regular basis. They all report back to a Coordinator and Assistant. We also have Café Companions available to café customers in the Ministry Centre, and pastoral reps in all our outreach groups.



Rev. Janet Roberts



Graham Rutter



Jonathan Lock

Discipleship

LYCIG

(Leading Your Church Into Growth) Involvement in LYCIG by both lay members and clergy is informing our discipleship and collaborative work.

Hope Explored

The LYCIG methods have been applied most often by inviting people to a three-week course called Hope Explored. This course describes Christian hope as a joyful expectation for the future, based on true events in the past which changes everything for the present. Hope Explored invites people to come to talk about any issues that concern them relating to the Christian faith. A number of attendees have come to faith in Jesus Christ and started to attend church regularly.

LYFE groups

There are a number of LYFE (Living Your Faith Everyday) groups, which meet weekly for fellowship and to deepen their faith by studying the Scriptures together.



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The Church and its community

Alpha

We have recently joined with St James Westhead to offer Alpha courses via Zoom. These have in general been well attended with some 20 people attending over three courses.

Sanctuary Course

Four groups, of about eight people in each group, have completed the Sanctuary Course, which looks, over an eight-week period, at various types of mental health issues from a Christian perspective; how they may be recognised and how people may be counselled.



Christ Church Primary School

The school is almost adjoining the church and there are close ties between school and church. Clergy go in to the school regularly and the school uses the church building quite often. There is potential for closer cooperation.

Wider Worship and Co-operation

There is an enthusiastic and growing group of Bell Ringers, some of whom are very committed church members. They ring every Sunday for the 10.45am service as well as for weddings and special occasions. They like to open the bell tower to visitors.

There is a full range of Uniformed groups from Scouts & Guides who are Church affiliated. They meet in the Scout HQ near the Ministry Centre. After a time away from Church they are now attending a Parade Service once a term.

Children's Work

We are hoping to recruit a Youth Worker soon. Funding and housing are available. There is an enthusiastic and committed team for Sunday mornings, but now only a smallish number of children. Our thriving youth work among teenagers ended after the departure of our main Youth Leaders and we are aware there is much work to be done in this area. There is good support for children's work in the Parish and many help on an ad hoc basis at things like Holiday Clubs, Light Party and weekends away.

Foodbanks

We are involved in **Ormskirk Foodbank and Skelmersdale and District Foodbank**, both working under the auspices of The Trussell Trust. We supply a number of trustees and volunteers to both foodbanks and act as a collection centre for donations from several schools, and from our church.



Debt Advice

Christ Church was one of a group of churches that set up **West Lancashire Debt Advice** service in Ormskirk in 2013. Christ Church continues to support it and currently provides one Debt Adviser.





Christ Church Aughton

Street Pastors

Christ Church Aughton has been heavily involved in the **Ormskirk Street Pastor Ministry** since its launch almost 14 years ago. In partnership with other churches patrolling the streets of the town on Friday and Saturday evenings. Their calling is to listen, care and provide practical help on a non-judgemental basis and in doing so to share the love of Jesus.

School Pastors

Several members of the congregation are fully trained **school pastors**. They are drawn from a number of local churches. They are under the auspices of the Ascension trust, which is a Christian inter-denominational organisation.

West Lancashire Ecological Trust

We have links with **Gorse Hill Nature Reserve** which is a 90+ acre site dedicated to preserving nature and supporting wildlife. We have Church members that are committed volunteers, and we have held occasional services and joint events at the Reserve in the recent past.

Online Presence

In addition to our own website and presence on '**A Church Near You**', we use social media for worship, outreach and community building.

With the onset of Covid we quickly went on to Zoom and around 70 of the congregation logged on each Sunday. We have a longstanding **Facebook** page.

We have continued to livestream every 10.45am service since Covid – initially to Facebook and now to **YouTube**. Morning prayer is livestreamed to Facebook via Zoom and Facebook is also used for announcements – it has over 900 members. We have an **X account**, but this is only occasionally

updated. The Ministry Centre operates a complementary Facebook page.

As the online world evolves, we anticipate that our digital presence will remain a key area.



Street Pastors



Music team



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Groups and activities

Bumps and Babes

This group aims to share Jesus through love and support for babies, carers and parents. Over the last year it had 26 members who met weekly. The group facilitator encourages members to participate in Church life in various ways.

Toddlers

Run by a group of 12 volunteers, about 40 children attend each week with their parent or carer. It

provides a children's play area with toys and other items and also encourages participation in the life of the Church.

Knit and Natter

This friendly group started 10 years ago and meets twice a month to be a safe haven for the lonely and to make items. These items are donated to various causes and also raises money for selected charities.



Knit & Natter

Luncheon Club

Engaging with our over-65's community members, Luncheon Club provides a three-course meal for approximately 55 people. It meets twice a month and also celebrates Communion once a month. All members are cared for pastorally and thoroughly enjoy their time together.

FACT

'Friendship and a Cup of Tea', started in July 2018 for anyone in the community who is isolated or lonely. Members experience a morning of good conversation and much laughter. The group has about 18 regular members and is open to everyone in the community. It has a good reputation, with new arrivals including NHS referrals and the recently bereaved.

The Cave

The Cave is a men's group that has been running for almost three years and has a regular attendance of between 20 and 30. It meets weekly, and the men enjoy games, conversation and refreshments.



Luncheon Club volunteers





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The Church and its buildings

The Church Building

Christ Church is like a beacon at the top of the hill: a striking building that can be seen across the Parish and for many miles beyond. Situated on the A59 main road from Preston to Liverpool, a Grade 2 listed building, its distinctive tower is the highest point in West Lancashire. It can be seen and heard for miles around and has outstanding views from the top. It's a traditional church with wooden pews and stained-glass windows.

We are fortunate to have a building that is in basically good repair. There are the usual ongoing issues with maintenance of a Victorian building, and we have just replaced the 50-year-old gas boiler. However, there are no imminent significant repairs outstanding.

Vicarage

The Diocese is in the process of selling the previous Vicarage which is no longer fit for purpose. A Vicarage will be provided within the parish and it may be possible to view the house.

Curate's House

The church also owns a property that in the past was used as accommodation for the Curate. Currently we are including this accommodation as part of the package being offered to the new Youth Worker.



Our super Ministry Centre

The purpose-built **Ministry Centre**, located next to the church, is a light, modern building which opened in 2010. Accessed by a spacious foyer, it contains a hall capable of seating 260, the Church office and meeting rooms of various sizes. The Centre is supported by a fully equipped large kitchen. Cafe Vista, on the first floor, has spectacular views over surrounding countryside.

The building is used by Church groups on Sundays, most weekdays and evenings, and is hired out to community groups at times when it is not required for Church ministries.

Outside, the car park and access road lead to the modern Scout and Guide Headquarters which is used by these organisations most weekday evenings and by a thriving University of the 3rd Age during the day.

The Ministry Centre is run by an employed part-time administrator who is supported by two part-time caretakers.





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Café Vista

Café Vista

The Café mission is to serve quality food and beverages, encouraging meaningful connections in a faith-filled environment. Café Vista is very successful and is more than just a coffee shop — it's a community hub where people can connect, reflect and recharge. Run by a team of volunteers, it provides a warm place for all whether seeking a quiet time, deep conversation or a friendly face.



Café Vista



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Our vision for the church interior

Our vision for the church interior reordering is centred on creating a welcoming, and flexible space that meets the diverse needs of its congregation and community. Stemming from a 2019 PCC Vision Day, the project aims to facilitate worship, foster fellowship, and accommodate a variety of ministries.

The reordering will prioritise accessibility for all abilities, eco-friendly solutions, and enhanced comfort while respecting and preserving the Church's historical character. It seeks to optimise the building's use, extend ministry activities within the church, and integrate energy-efficient systems for improved heating and sustainability.

We have already installed a new background gas boiler and infra-red heating within the church. Solar panels have also been added to the Ministry Centre roof.

The remaining plan is divided into two phases:

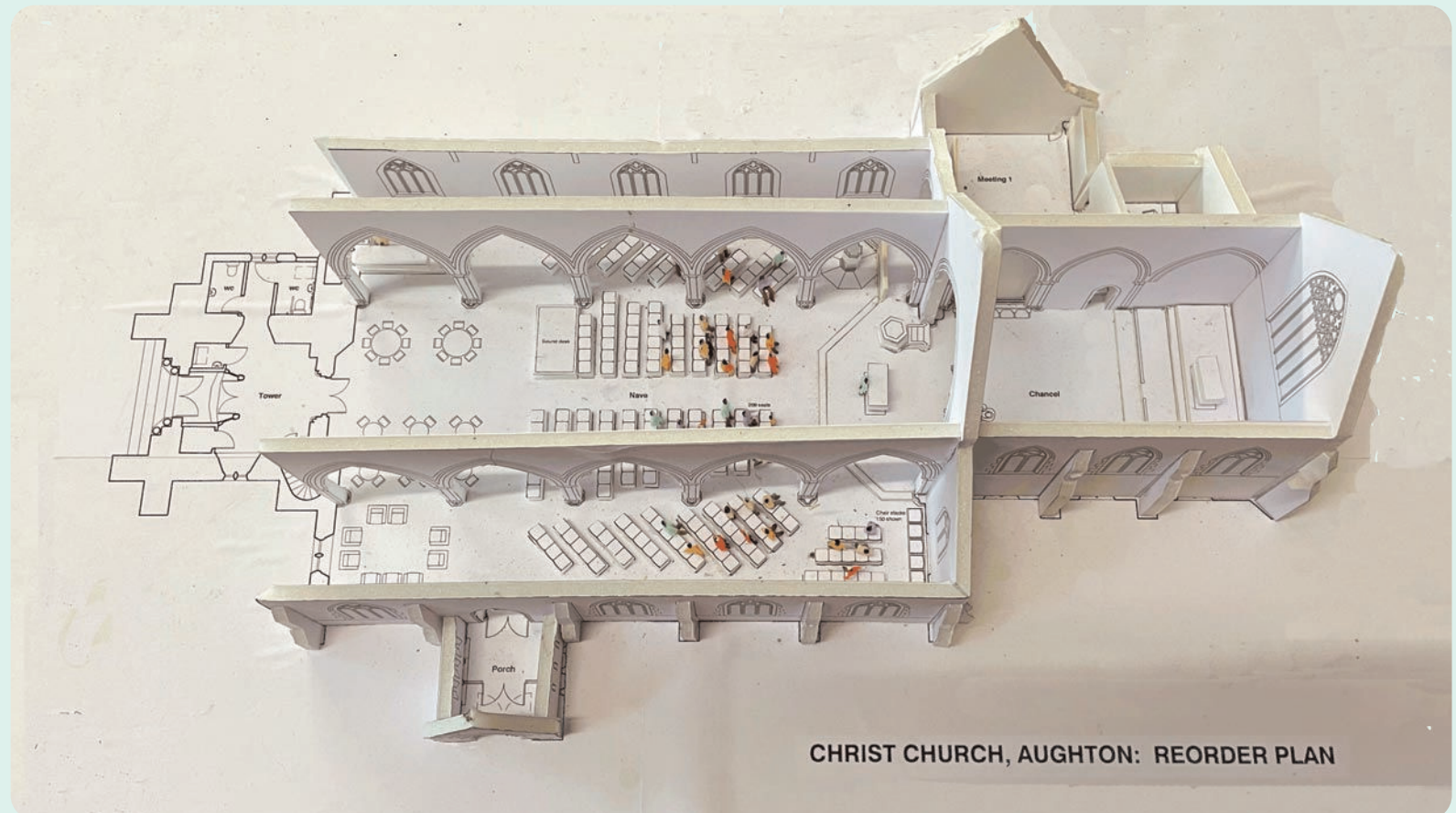
- Phase 1 focuses on the West End, introducing accessible toilets, a new kitchen with a wheelchair-friendly counter,

flexible seating with chairs replacing pews, and glass entrance doors.

- Phase 2 involves adding a ramp for disabled access to the north

wall, redesigning the Chancel and vestry areas to create improved meeting spaces and a Lady Chapel.

There are significant designated funds available for this Phase 1 but Phase 2 is a longer-term objective.



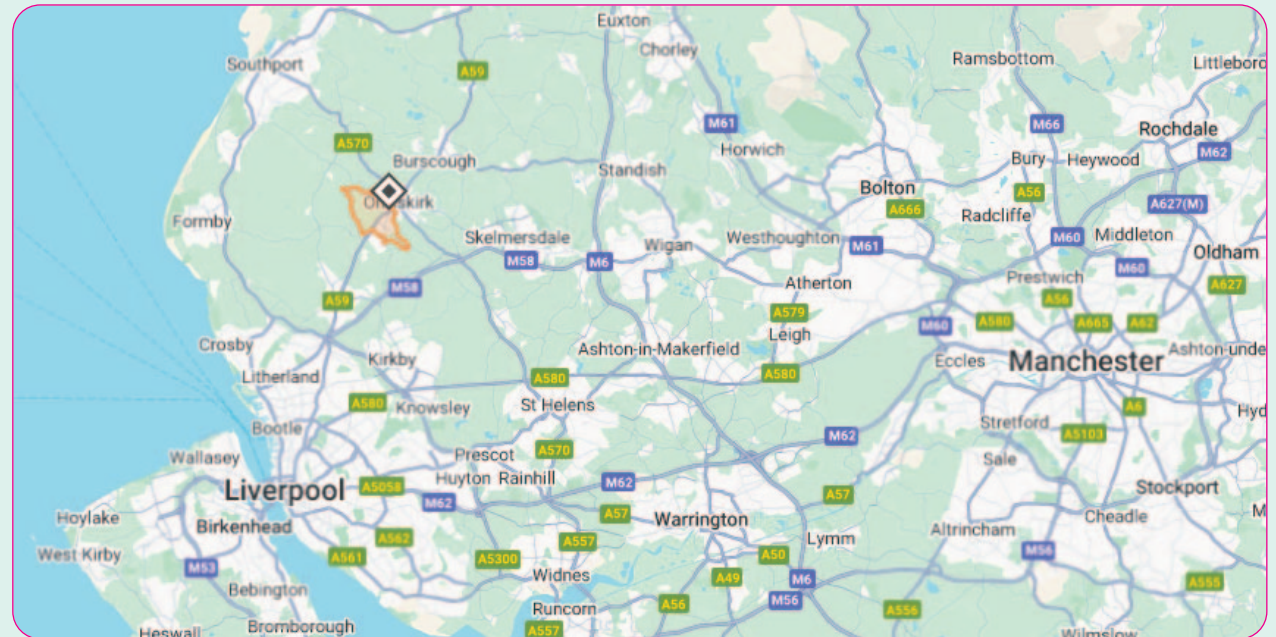


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About the parish

The Parish is located in the south part of the ancient market town of Ormskirk, 14 miles north of Liverpool on the West Lancashire plain. Ormskirk is a town with a number of schools and a good housing stock and is home to Edge Hill University. Ormskirk is an historic market town with businesses ranging from professional and financial services to retail and coffee shops, restaurants and bars. The largest employers in the town are Ormskirk Hospital, Edge Hill University, and West Lancashire Borough Council. Ormskirk has a population of around 24,000, including the population of Aughton. There are social and civic events through the year in Coronation Park, including Park Praise.

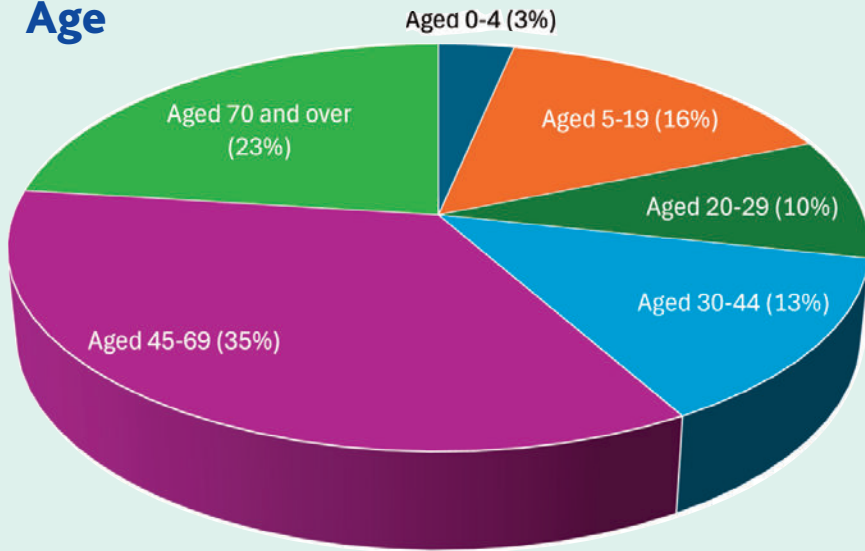
The Parish has a population of 7,696 in an area of 2.8 square miles comprising a mixture of suburbs and farmland. The majority of the houses within the parish are detached or semi-detached, owner occupied, with a small amount of privately rented accommodation and council housing. There are two residential care homes within the parish. The population is slowly increasing due to new builds, including retirement homes.



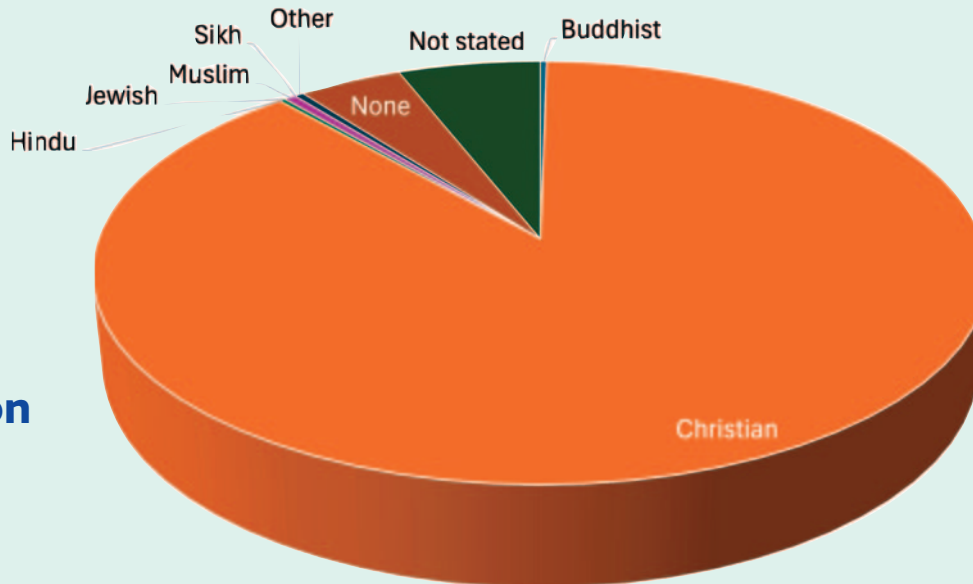
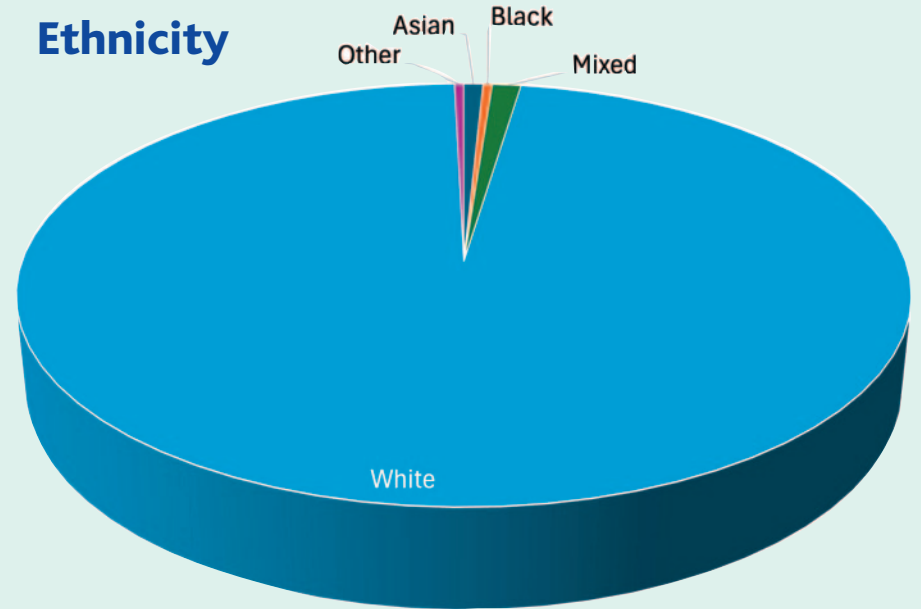


Parish Demographics

Age



Ethnicity



Religion

RURAL/URBAN CLASSIFICATION

% Area urban56.8

With a very low index of deprivation, the Parish is 'among the wealthiest in the country' (CUF). The rate of working age unemployment is very low.



The local region

Transport links from Aughton are good. There is a frequent train service to Liverpool, with Aughton Park Station within the Parish, and buses to Liverpool, Ormskirk and Preston. There are also good rail and road links to the rest of the country and Liverpool and Manchester Airports are less than an hour's drive away.

Christ Church overlooks **Gorse Hill Nature Reserve**. The Wildfowl and Wetland Trust Centre at Martin Mere; the National Trust Rufford Old Hall and Formby beach, are within easy reach. Further afield, and within two hours' drive are beautiful areas along the Fylde and North Wales coasts as well as the



Liverpool

well-known areas of the Lake District, the Yorkshire Dales, the Peak District and Forest of Bowland.

There are active theatres at **Edge Hill University** and the **Atkinson Arts Centre** in Southport offering visual and live arts. Liverpool is a culturally vibrant city with an international reputation for its music and performing arts and was European Capital of Culture in 2008.

The Liverpool **Everyman Theatre**, **Liverpool Empire**, **Liverpool Philharmonic Hall**, and the concert venue at the **Liverpool Arena** are all easily accessible. A rich and varied programme of visual art in Liverpool is provided by galleries including **Liverpool Tate**, the **Walker** and **Bluecoat**.



There are, of course, a number of very good football clubs in Liverpool!



Formby beach



Ormskirk market



The wider context

Staffing and Committees

The staffing structure and committee system in the Parish is designed to distribute decision-making and tasks appropriately so that we can operate effectively. Specifically, our approach aims to support the Vicar and avoid a 'Vicar does everything' situation. We are working on the structure and **this is a link** to our 'work in progress' – for illustration purposes only as this is yet to be discussed in detail.

Historically the Church has had curates, and it is hoped that we will have a curate in the future subject to the Vicar having the necessary training. Christ Church is recognised as a good training parish.

PCC Committees

We have a full PCC with 14 members that has sub-committees who are responsible to the PCC for Finance, Fabric and the Ministry Centre. These sub-committees are formed of PCC and co-opted non-PCC

members under the guidance of a chair who gives written reports of the work of the sub committees to the PCC at bi-monthly meetings.

Ministry Team

We do not have a formal 'Shared Ministry Team' but do have a team of church members led by the Vicar who meet on a monthly basis to discuss, plan and oversee church services and ministries. There are

currently nine members including the clergy, the reader and the co-ordinators for children's groups, house groups and pastoral care.

Working With Other Parishes in our Deanery

We are part of Ormskirk Deanery and have a close working relationship with many of the parishes. The Deanery clergy all meet regularly together, have an annual retreat and Christmas meal.

We have not joined the Diocesan programme Fit for Mission (FfM) but are very supportive of the Churches in our deanery who are following this initiative.

We are engaged with LYCIG (Leading your Church into growth) in the pursuit of growth both numerically and spiritually.

We are working as a cluster with six nearby parishes who are not part of FfM and share and promote outreach events such as breakfast meetings, sporting events and outdoor Pentecost services. These churches attended a national training event and are being mentored by Rev Neil Short over the next 12 months. This training is key for our future ministry, as we bring the benefits of LYCIG to our whole Church family.

Working With Other Churches Churches Together in Ormskirk:

There is a long tradition of lay folk and clergy from the town's Anglican, Methodist, Roman Catholic, Christian Fellowship and Mission working co-operatively. There are several annual and bi-annual shared events. Leaders meet regularly for breakfast, prayer and planning, sometimes joined by Chaplains from the Hospital, University and a Nursing home. Only the local Strict Baptist Church is not involved with Churches Together.

Our PCC members 2025



Peter Stewart
Vice Chair and
Deanery Synod rep



Jonathan Burke
PCC Secretary



Mark Patterson
Treasurer



Carole Rankin
Warden



Dennis Koojje
Warden



John Critchley
Deputy Warden
and Deanery Synod rep



Dave Sharples
Deputy Warden



Laurence Abernethy



Jodie Taylor



Josh Johnson



David Cobbold
Deanery Synod rep



Jessica Harrison



Jonathan Lock
Reader
and Deanery Synod rep



Rev Janet Roberts
Ministry Team



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Finances and Attendance figures

FINANCES

We are in the fortunate position of having a congregation who give freely and generously to the Church. We are currently in the process of making up a temporary shortfall on the Parish Share. We have still continued our tithe to support missions and charities and serviced the outstanding loan on our Ministry Centre. We are aware that we need to improve our setting and monitoring of budgets.

In common with many sectors in society we have been seriously impacted by the increase in energy costs and our finances have been under strain. However with the recent installation of solar panels and the change of heating to infra-red we anticipate this will improve significantly.

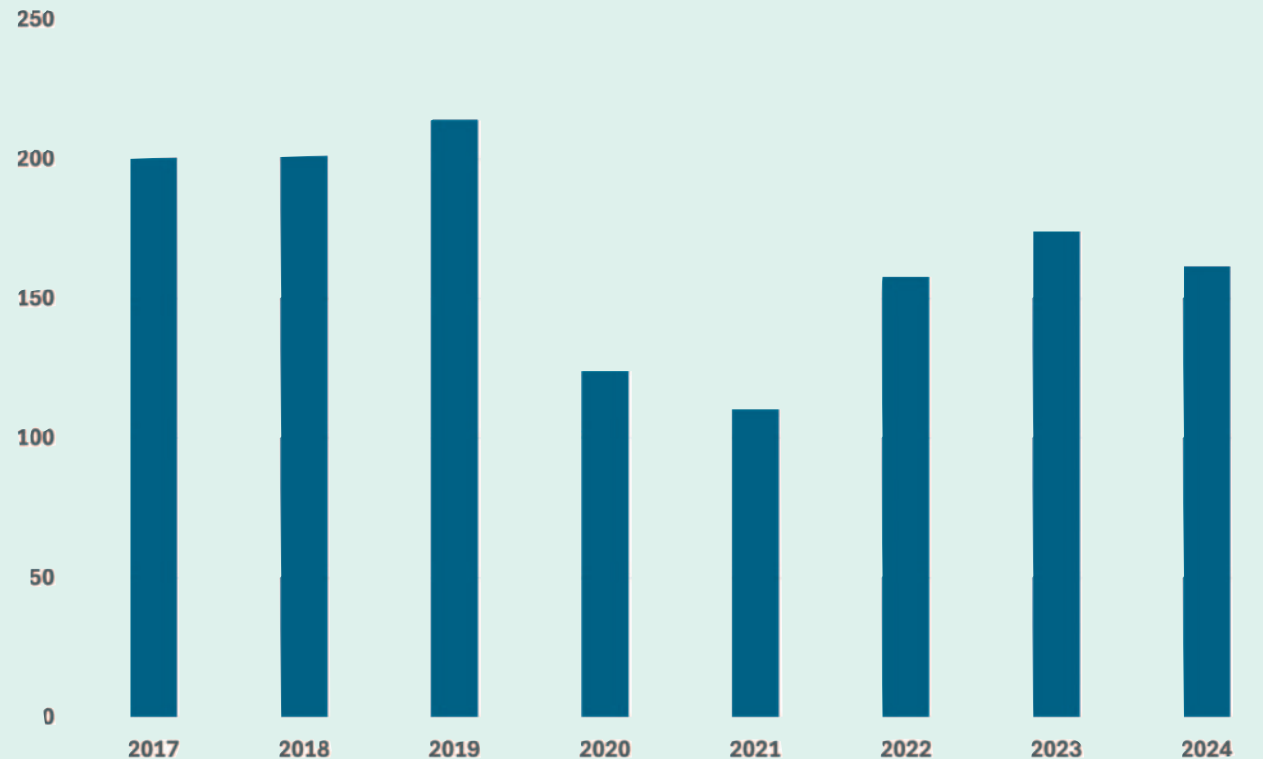
Further details of our **financial position** can be found online together with a summary of our income and expenditure for the last three financial years. Analysis of the Church's accounts can be found by searching the Charities Commission website: (Charity Number 1129036).

ATTENDANCE FIGURES

We pray each week in our main Sunday services for growth. Whilst the figures do not evidence the desired outcome, we take comfort from the growing numbers of our local community coming to our Ministry Centre. We have been disappointed at the dramatic fall in the numbers of youth attending Church, but look to address this by appointing a full time Youth Worker for which funding and accommodation are already in place. The fall in youth and young people numbers has seen the average age of the congregation rise with the majority of congregants being over 60 years of age.

However, this is also a blessing in that we have a committed group of retirees able to support the various activities run through the Ministry Centre. Several dozen individuals regularly volunteer and are involved in Centre's activities.

There is therefore, considerable potential in our Church, which we pray our new Vicar will be able to exploit for God's purpose in Aughton and the surrounding area.





Christ Church Aughton

As with many churches across the country, various factors have attributed to lower attendance. These include Covid and reduced participation from youth. Nevertheless, our services are lively and Spirit-filled, with livestreams now making them accessible to members who struggle to attend in person.

Major services have followed a similar pattern of partial recovery:

- Easter 142
(193 in 2019)
- Harvest Festival 81
(223 in 2019)
- Remembrance Sunday 269
(418 in 2019)
- Christmas Day 193
(241 in 2019)

Electoral Roll

The Electoral Roll has been stable for the three years to 2024 at 254/255.

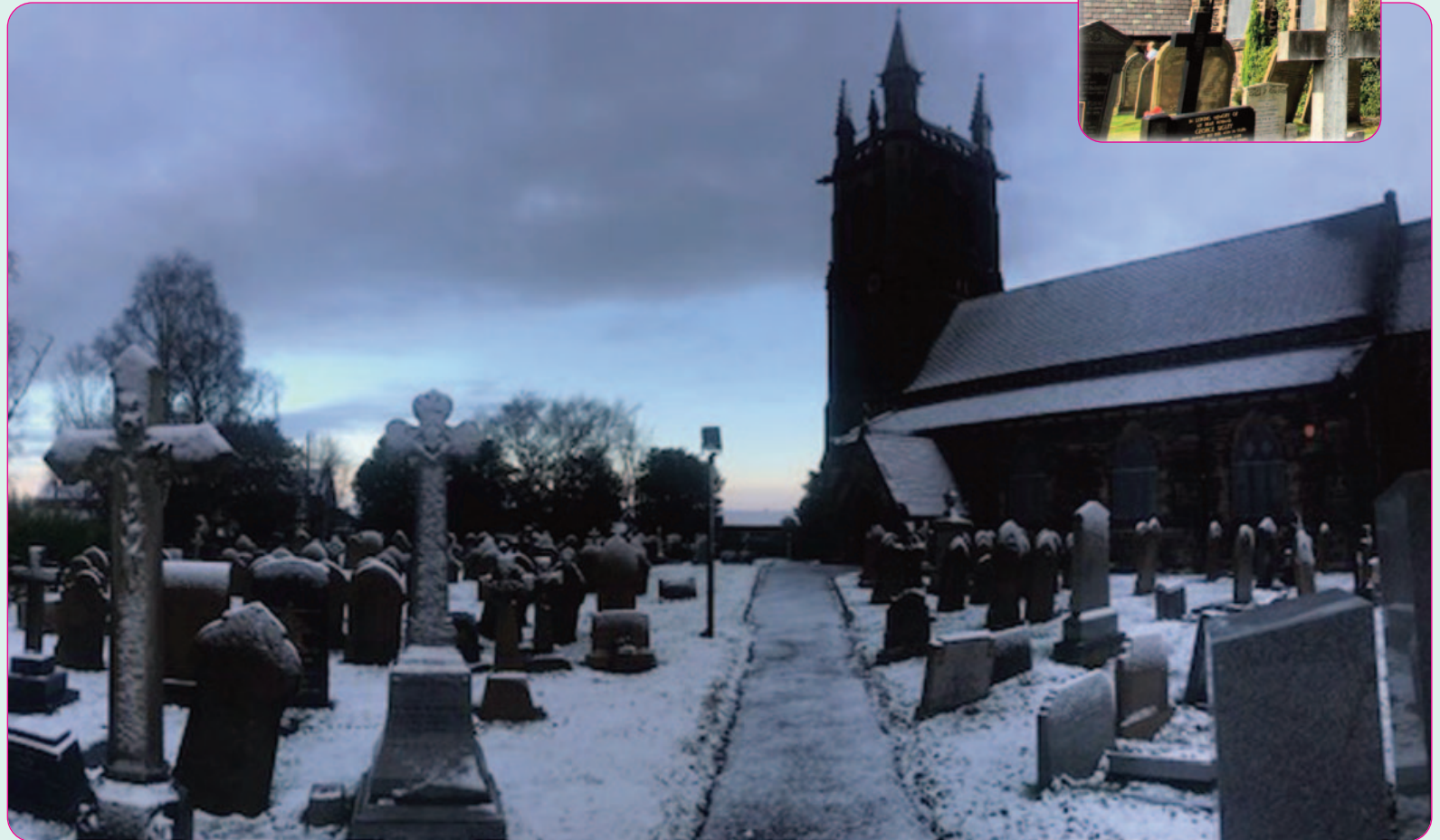
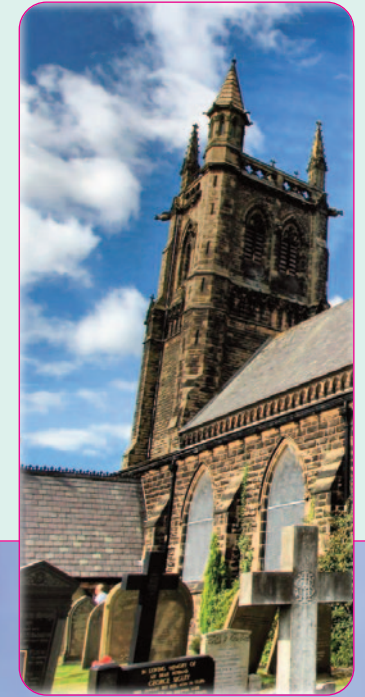
- The female : male ratio is 5 : 3.
- 74% live in the Parish.
- 58% are in the 1920—1960 cohort age group. In other words, our Congregation is skewed towards the older generation.

Diversity

Our mission of 'Sharing Jesus with everyone' shows that we aim to be a church that warmly welcomes all people, exactly as they are. At Christ Church we value the Church of England's traditional teachings on sexuality, while acknowledging there is a range of views within the Parish community. We anticipate engaging with these issues thoughtfully, prayerfully and respectfully in the coming years.

Safeguarding

We are committed to the safeguarding of children, young people and adults. We follow the House of Bishops guidance and policies and have two Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs). Leadership training for our PSOs has been arranged for the near future.



What Our Church Family Thinks

Attendees at the first Sunday service of 2025 were asked to describe the church in five words, and this is the Word Cloud. Additional comments described the Church as Jesus-centred, and open to everyone, with strengths in charity links, fostering relationships, and supporting spiritual growth. They also highlighted opportunities to engage more with youth and address under-developed potential, leadership, and vision.



A few quotes from Christ Church Aughton members

The 'Cave' is a very special place. For me it's an oasis in the desert that is my difficult daily life. I've been welcomed from day one, with no agenda or judgement. As a result I've now started attending church. This has also been very welcoming and friendly.

Mike



As a 'newbie'. I agree with all the positive comments. It's great to be able to drop into such a relaxed space as 'The Cave' and mix with such a splendid bunch of chaps.

Roy



"My husband and I were looking for a local church when we moved into the area. We came to visit Christ Church and knew it was where we were meant to be. I was inspired and touched by the words of the Vicar and the worship. There is a lovely welcoming atmosphere and I am excited about what God will do here in the future."

Becky



"Christ Church gives me a great sense of community. I feel very inspired by the positive welcoming people I encounter there."

Charlotte



"There are so many opportunities to become involved in Church life and always someone to support and encourage. Many deep and special friendships have been formed in the over 40 years I've been a member of Christ Church.

Irene

