



The Parish Of St Jude, Wolverhampton.



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Section A: AN INTRODUCTION to St. JUDE'S.

St Jude's is a community of Christian worshippers who meet in an historic, landmark mid-Victorian church in the northwest of the city of Wolverhampton. Worshippers come from not just the Parish, but from a much wider area that includes areas outside Wolverhampton.

No matter where people are coming from geographically, culturally, socio-economically or spiritually, we want people to see the St Jude's family as part of their extended family; accepted, secure (loved) and significant not just in God's eyes but by the people of St Jude's.

We think that we are attractive to Christians because of our long tradition of being scripturally based with an evangelical and pastoral outlook with less formality to worship services than 'higher' churches, together with the fact that the congregation is, arguably, very representative of the local, national, ethnically and socio-economically diverse population.

In a rapidly changing world where nothing stays the same for long, and the pressures of the world are ever increasing, we love our church family as it is a community that provides an unconditional welcome and some constancy; a rock on which they may stand firm against those pressures that would draw them away from God's Son. Only God, His Son, Jesus, and scripture provide this constancy and hope. St Jude's tries to provide a Holy Spirit led Gospel message but also a pastoral environment for people to grow in their faith becoming better able to fend off the burning arrows of the devil and temptations of the world but also to make a difference for Christ in the world.

As our strapline of '**Receiving, Living & Sharing Christ as Lord**' suggests, we aim to demonstrate and witness to the love of Jesus, showing hospitality, actively engaging with our neighbours both locally and internationally.

We're looking for a priest who has had the call from the Holy Spirit to serve this Christian family at St Jude's church and Parish and help us grow God's Kingdom. We've been praying throughout our vacancy that the person God has selected to be our vicar is being anointed & led by the Holy Spirit. Someone fired up by the prospect of making a difference for Christ to the diverse people of this part of the world, of building a team of likeminded brothers & sisters to help people find faith, grow in it, and witness to Christ's love in how they lead their lives.

If you're being nudged by the Spirit to serve the Lord in Wolverhampton, READ ON ...

Section B: Welcome from the Bishop of Lichfield.

The Rt Revd Dr Michael Igrave

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THE BISHOP OF LICHFIELD

A word of welcome to the Diocese of Lichfield

Cradled at the intersection of the Midlands and the North, and the interface between England and Wales, the Diocese of Lichfield is the ancient centre of Christianity in what was the Kingdom of Mercia.

We are rightfully grateful for the inheritance we have from our first bishop St Chad that leads us to focus on Discipleship, Vocation and Evangelism as we live and serve among the communities of Staffordshire, northern Shropshire and the Black Country.

By answering God's call to minister in Lichfield Diocese you will benefit from being part of a wide family, mixing with people serving in a variety of contexts – from the grittiest inner-city neighbourhoods of Stoke and the Black Country, to the leafiest rural parishes of Staffordshire and Shropshire, to the sparsest upland communities of the Staffordshire Moorlands and Welsh Borders.

And we embrace the widest spectrum of church traditions – evangelical and catholic, liberal and conservative, choral and charismatic – as we journey together in mission. As a colleague recently put it, it is our goal to be a 'spacious and gracious diocese'.

It is my determination and that of my episcopal colleagues that your calling to minister with us in Lichfield Diocese will be a time of encouragement, fulfilment, challenge and joy. You will not be alone in your ministry; as part of the wider team our colleagues among the diocesan staff keenly bring their various specialisms both spiritual and practical to offer resource and support as you serve our parishes, fresh expressions, schools and chaplaincies.



The Rt Revd Dr Michael Igrave OBE
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Section C: THE PARISH OF St JUDE's WOLVERHAMPTON.



Wolverhampton Deanery

Revd. Richard Merrick. Rural Dean.
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Wolverhampton Deanery includes the 16 churches within central Wolverhampton and Bilston as well as the Chaplaincies from the University, NHS and HMYOI. It is one of three deaneries covering the city and surrounding area.

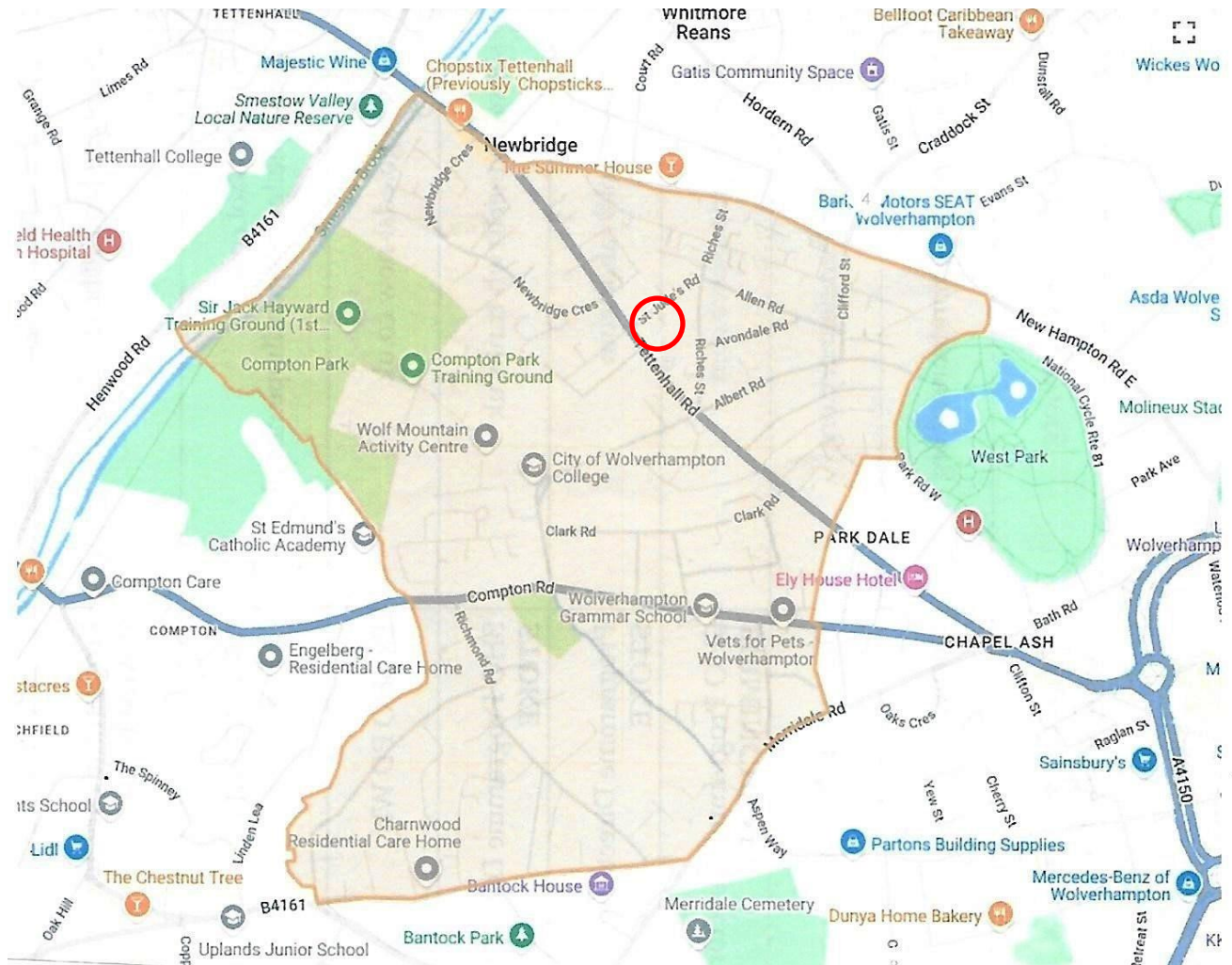
As a member of the clergy team you would be included within a mutually supportive and yet diverse chapter who meet regularly together. The purpose of our Deanery Synod is to encourage parishes to seek to work in a spirit of unity and collaboration to support one another in ways that enable us to proclaim the gospel more effectively. Working within the diocesan framework of developing Discipleship, Vocations and Evangelism in our churches.

Beyond the Anglican Church there is a strong ecumenical network of different denominations who work together to seek unity across the diversity of the Church in Wolverhampton.

You would become a valued and vital member of these networks.

Revd. Richard Merrick.
Rural/Area Dean

Section D: THE PARISH OF St JUDE's, WOLVERHAMPTON.



The geography: - The Parish of St Jude Wolverhampton is situated one mile to the north-west of Wolverhampton city centre, beyond the city's dual carriageway Ring Road.

St. Jude's Church (position circled **red** in the map above) is in the northern half of the parish on the A41 Tettenhall Road, one of the two tree-lined main roads through the parish, the other being the A454, Compton Road.

The Parish can be divided into four distinct zones:

- 1) To the northeast of Tettenhall Road is the southernmost part of Whitmore Reans which consist of Victorian terraces of mixed rented and owner occupancy. (This Urban Priority Area borders one of the most deprived parishes in Wolverhampton). Many of the properties on Newhampton Road and at the Newbridge end of the Tettenhall Road are small businesses including hardware, convenience stores fast food outlets & pubs.

Section D: THE PARISH OF St JUDE's WOLVERHAMPTON.

- 2) The western most part of the Parish consists of the 'Compton Campus', a 'green wedge' where local secondary schools (St. Peter's Collegiate School, St. Edmund's Catholic School, and Wolverhampton Girl's High School plus Wolverhampton College's Wulfrun Campus) are located. In this same area is the Wolverhampton Wanderers F.C. training ground. To the north of the campus is the more affluent area of Newbridge which is home to the Newbridge Preparatory School and Newbridge Tennis and Squash Club. Beyond the western boundary of the Parish is the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal, Smestow Valley Nature Reserve and railway walk, an attractive area popular for recreation & dog walking.
- 3) The central part of the Parish between Paget Road and Larches Lane consists of Victorian terraces with the modern St. Jude's Primary Academy at the corner of Paget and Clark Roads. There are also convenience stores and a petrol station on Tettenhall Road.
- 4) The southern part of the parish, south of the Compton Road (A454), is a more affluent area, consisting of larger terraced & detached properties with a mix of Victorian, mid and post war housing. Wolverhampton Grammar School and several residential homes can be found here. Bantock Park and Museum are located immediately to the south of the Parish boundary.

There are at least 11 residential care homes in the Parish providing for around 250 elderly people.

For more information about the Parish, please see **Section J: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.**

Section E: THE CONGREGATION, SERVICES & ACTIVITIES.

THE CONGREGATION:

The 2024-25 Electoral Roll has 118 members.

The PCC has recently (Sept. 2024) conducted a demographic survey of Sunday attendees (102 different people over a four-week period), 25% are under 18 with >20% over 70; 36% male; 63% are of non-White ethnic background with 25% being of Black or Black British. African ethnicity being the highest non-white ethnicity.

There are at least 36 frequent congregational members who volunteer for and provide the various activities associated with church life including, but not limited to, leading & putting together services, preaching, leading prayer, assisting with communion, reading the lessons, singing, serving coffee, welcoming, cleaning, grounds & building maintenance.



The PCC decided that at St Jude's, we will follow the Church of England Lectionary for services and scripture readings and preaching closely aligns to these.

For more information about the Congregation, please see **Section J: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.**

Section E: THE CONGREGATION, SERVICES & ACTIVITIES.

WORSHIP SERVICES:

St Jude's Church has worship services under the strapline of, '**Receiving, Living & Sharing Christ as Lord**' that have centred on a regular 10:30 Sunday morning service.

These usually last about 1½ hours. For quite some time, this has comprised a mixture of Anglican service types of Morning Prayer (typically with junior school children leaving for separate [J-Team] activities, Holy Communion and Worship Together (with all



family members present). Prior to the vacancy period, services of Holy Communion would occur twice monthly but since the vacancy, they occur monthly under the presidency of a Diocesan priest with Permission to Officiate. We administer the **Holy Communion** sacraments of as separate 'bread' (wafers are used) and wine in keeping with Diocesan advice and scriptural integrity.

During the vacancy, services are organized and delivered by a small number of (PCC approved) church members, usually with one leading the service, whilst another delivers the sermon.



Spiritual songs/ hymns are normally chosen in agreement by the service and worship leaders, the priest (if present) and our organist. Currently most of our music to accompany the songs is via the PA system and the iSING Worship app. for which we have a subscription to allow new songs to be made available. Although there is no 'formal' choir, we have a growing number of singers helping to lead sung worship which is often

accompanied by 'live' music from a small music group or our longstanding church organist.

Section E: THE CONGREGATION, SERVICES & ACTIVITIES.

Prior to the vacancy some of these communal worship services were combined with a **Baptism** service, either using the stone font for infant baptism at the western end of the nave or the walk-in, sunken baptistry in the transept. We do have services at other times e.g., non-Sunday major festival days or ones more targeted at children & their families. Occasionally we'll have a midweek evening service in the Church Hall.

We do have IT facilities for back projecting material during services, this facility is not used every week, instead, a paper service sheet together with a News & Prayer Topics section is provided each Sunday.

Children's services/ Activities are delivered by a small group of adults via the **J-Team** for our primary school age children in our Church Hall. This occurs most Sunday's during School Term time except when there is a Worship Together service in the main church.



PRAYER

Prayer, being a fundamental part of every Christian's relationship with God is encouraged. Formal (group) prayer time out with that of Intercessional prayer during Sunday Services is organised for each Saturday morning (09:00 – 10:00); on the first Wednesday every month (19:30 – 20:30) and a 'Prayer Corner', provided during Communion Services for individuals to be prayed with/ for by two church members. Prayer also takes place in our home-based Small Groups.

To assist church members in their prayer life, the PCC has recently re-introduced a Prayer Diary. This lists all church members who have pledged to pray for each other throughout the year as well as a weekly 'Prayer Topics' section on the weekly Notice sheet.

Section E: THE CONGREGATION, SERVICES & ACTIVITIES.

OUTREACH

Church members organise several activities that may be classified as missional outreach, these include: -

- 1) **Carers & Toddlers.** This is a weekly (Tuesdays; 09:15 – 11:15) event for anyone in the area with Pre-school children to attend for informal refreshments & fellowship.
- 2) **Cuppa 'n' Cake.** This is a monthly (3rd Thursday) event for anyone to attend at which an 'afternoon tea experience' along with fellowship may be had.
- 3) **English Language lessons.** Free, hour long basic English language lessons for those in our community (or church) whose first language is not English, are provided four mornings each week.
- 4) **Schools.** There has been a long tradition for members of St Jude's Church to engage with schools in the parish and immediate neighbourhood. The previous incumbent spoke weekly at the morning assemblies of the local Primary School Academy, St Jude's, as well as occasionally at the nearby St Andrew's Primary School. There is one PCC member allocated to be our link to each of the Church of England affiliated schools. One member regularly leads a fortnightly assembly at St Jude's Primary Academy. There is less direct involvement in our local secondary schools, St Peter's Collegiate & The Wolverhampton Girls High School. However, all three highlighted schools (above) have or are planning to visit St Jude's church for services or other educational visits.
- 5) **Mission partners.** The PCC regularly reviews those Christian-based charities that are given one tenth of the 10% of the previous year's voluntary unrestricted income. These are: - i) Wolverhampton Well, ii) Little Brothers of the Good Shepherd, iii) Perton Christian Fellowship - Romania Project, iv) Tearfund, v) The Leprosy Mission, vi) Barnabas Aid, vii) Hope From Above, and viii) Interserve.

These organisations occasionally send a representative to attend & present on behalf of their charities at a Sunday service. They usually also send updates for the church noticeboard with some occasionally delivering such in person.

Discipleship & explicitly Evangelistic activities. There are a small number of House groups and although we have run various discipleship/ evangelistic courses such as '*Alpha*', '*Start*', and '*Discipleship Explored*' in the past, we have not been running these for a few years, in part due to lack of volunteers but would be keen to re-start such activities.

Section F: THE LEADERSHIP & STAFF.

The Parochial Church Council has as its membership: - two church wardens (Pradip Sudra & Simon Fenner), a PCC secretary, (John Wallbridge), a Parish Safeguarding Officer (Dawn Peach, ex-officio), an authorized Lay Minister, Amita Sudra, a Planned Giving Secretary (Joan Reynolds), a Deanery Synod representative and worship lead (Mark Harrington) and three other members. During our vacancy, it has been meeting monthly.



There is a management team that comprises the two wardens, and the Parish Secretary, Alita Caine, that decides on day-to-day matters. This meets weekly.

Paid staff consist of The Parish Secretary, Alita Caine, the Verger, Graham Sutton and church cleaner, Blessing Osagie.

For several years at St. Jude's, a Diocesan Mandated Leadership Team has been in place. This team has an oversight of the parish during the vacancy and will work in conjunction with the PCC and the Wardens.

Section G: STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, & OPPORTUNITIES.

OUR STRENGTHS: -

- We have a strong emphasis on scripturally grounded teaching both for children & adults.
- We are a well-established church in a landmark location in a mainly residential urban area.
- We are a reasonably sized, growing congregation with a flourishing children's ministry.
- Our congregation has great diversity of ethnic, age & socioeconomic backgrounds.
- We have a significant number who volunteer to support various church activities.
- We have an 'Occasional Leaders & Preachers' (OLP) group of eleven, PCC approved, regular church members who provide the bulk of leading & preaching at our Sunday services. They have all received instruction and feedback from each other at quarterly OLP group meetings.
- We have a reasonable 'estate' to support current & future activities.
- We are in an acceptable financial position (2023 Total Income £102,646: Total Expenditure £98,568).
- We maintain church giving to our external mission partners (in 2023, this was £6,758).
- We have a very active J-Team (Primary School age) 'Sunday School'.
- We maintain an active engagement with several local schools.
- We have a growing singing group.
- We have an enthusiastic, diverse and effective PCC even during vacancy.
- We have regular active 'corporate' (non-Sunday) prayer & other meetings.

CHALLENGES: -

- Volunteer numbers are not always sufficient to provide for all the activities that we would love to run, e.g., discipleship courses.
- Low involvement by members in non-Sunday activities e.g., prayer & House Group meetings.
- Our 'in reach' to our parish schools is not as strong or, arguably, as effective as many would want.
- We have no specific spiritual nurture groups/ activities for our secondary school age children.
- The church giving whilst good, is not so great as to make it 'cash rich'.

Section G: STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, & OPPORTUNITIES.

- The congregational age profile. Most of the congregation live outside the Parish.
- The main church buildings are over 150 years old, and upkeep is a challenge, e.g., stonework, roof & heating system and the main church building would benefit from modernization and being made even more 'accessible' to all.
- The PCC has for many years taken a stand on benefitting from the proceeds of gambling. This makes fund raising more challenging.

OPPORTUNITIES: -

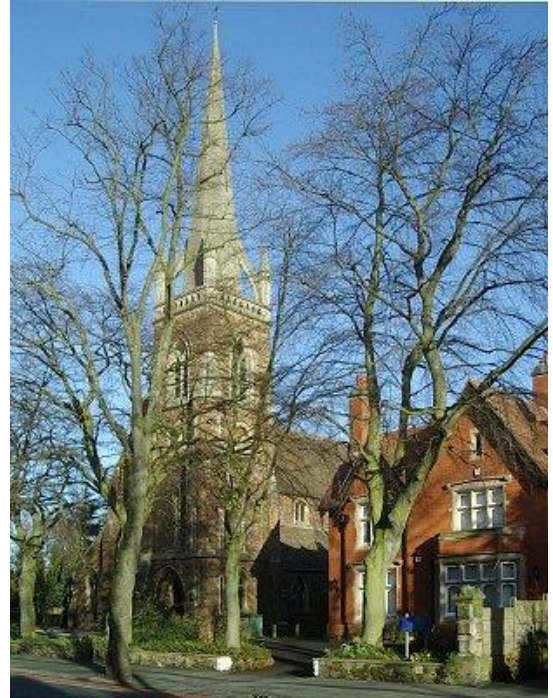
- We would love to build up in our brothers & sisters their desire to grow in faith & discipleship, e.g., by increasing home group participation & by running discipleship courses.
- There is a real desire to increase involvement of congregation members in worship activities, outreach & pastoral activities. Recent demographic changes in the congregation may play into this with there being more younger adults.
- The various outreach activities (language lessons, 'Cuppa & Cake', schools outreach and with Carers & Toddlers) need more intentional focus on Christ being the 'why' we do such activities which, if it were the case, will be blessed with fruitfulness for Christ.
- The national church's (and secular society's) desire to 'green' all aspects of western life will give opportunities to reduce/ eliminate the need at us at St Jude's for fossil fuel sourced heating. A greener Energy fund for solar panel derived heating & lighting is up & running.
- We want to develop our outreach & discipleship to teenagers with specific activities & nurturing.
- Boosting the church's spiritual energy and direction which would, God willing, translate into new and better ways of evangelising and building people's faith into action.

Section H: WHO DO WE WANT FOR OUR VICAR?

- We want a person, man or woman, who is full of the fruit of the Spirit born out of their love of Jesus and for their congregational flock & neighbour.
- A person with an energetic, 'fired-up' faith built on the rock of Jesus and Holy Scripture.
- Someone with a calling to work in the very diverse community of Wolverhampton with a good understanding of differing cultural influences.
- Someone with a passion for developing our reaching out to the young including through schools.
- Someone with the ability to use differing methods to develop the discipleship of individuals & smaller groups as well as whole congregations.
- Someone with the motivational ability to encourage our church family members both in their own spiritual growth as well as to become leaders of pastoral care & evangelistic action.
- We want our new vicar to come with good empathic leadership & interpersonal skills.

Section I: THE CHURCH HISTORY & INFRASTRUCTRE.

The **history** of the Parish church of St Jude (Diocesan Parish Code 620223), one of 429 parishes in the Lichfield Diocese, was formed on 10th August 1869 as a church plant from St Mark's Church in Chapel Ash (now closed as a place of worship) following a donation by a local resident. The church was built in decorated Gothic style in sandstone faced with ashlar dressings and tile roofs. It was consecrated in April 1869. A later Spire was added in 1878. A contemporaneous vicarage in red brick was built alongside the church but was sold off many years ago. Historic England granted St Jude's Church Grade II listed status in 1977.



The church is part of the **Lichfield Diocese** (Bishop Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave, OBE) in the Province of Canterbury. The Diocese is split into three Episcopal Areas, Lichfield, Shrewsbury and Wolverhampton. It is under the episcopal jurisdiction of the (recently enshrined) Bishop of Wolverhampton, Rt Rev. Timothy Wambunya, and one of the four Diocesan Archdeaconries; the **Walsall Archdeaconry** (in vacancy but being overseen by two Acting Archdeacon of Walsall, Rev. Julia Cody and Rev. Jim Trood). The current Rural Dean is the Rev. Richard Merrick of Holy Trinity Church, Heath Town, Wolverhampton.

St Jude's Church has a **patron**, The Church Pastoral Aid Society, CPAS.

St Jude's Church buildings include two basement rooms (one houses the gas heating boilers and an artesian well & the other was previously used as a Youth Club) under the northeastern end of the church; a triple doored entrance porch at the base of the Spire which contains a single electrically operated **bell**; the traditional Nave with serial wooden pews, a **stone font** under the west window and a small server; a transept with sunken **Baptistry** and a raised chancel with a (rarely used) wooden **pulpit**; a **Vestry**; an **organ** loft. Inside the church, there is room for over 200 people.

There is a moderate amount of on-site car parking both at the front and at the rear of the church.

Section I: THE CHURCH HISTORY & INFRASTRUCTRE.

An **audio-visual/ PA** mixing system/ desk is situated centrally within the nave and has connectivity for laptop/ iPad, CD/ DVD player and radio lapel & 'lollipop' microphones. A large retractable back projecting screen sits across the Chancel with the projector controllable from the PA desk (or remotely). There is an area with microphones in the east transept for our music group/ singers as well an area in the west transept used as a shielded 'Prayer Corner'.

There is a **meeting room** adjoined to the Chancel, called The Parish Room. A toilet block & corridor separate the Parish Room from a more modern **church hall** which houses our **Parish Office** and well-equipped kitchen/servery. Outside the church hall there is a 'Portacabin', currently called the Barnabus Cabin, which is used for some small group meetings.

The Vicarage although not officially part of the church buildings portfolio (it is a Diocesan responsibility) is a modern detached two storey, four bedroomed house, 21A St Jude's Road at the rear of the church. It has an integral incumbent's office. It has a good-sized secure garden and separate detached single garage. The garden has received regular maintenance and the house interior reviewed weekly during



the vacancy.

Next door to the vicarage, at number 21 St Jude's Road, is a semi-detached house that was gifted to the St Jude's Vicar & Wardens Trust. This has previously been used to provide accommodation for Curates at St Jude's but is currently rented to a church family

Section J: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

THE PARISH:

The population: - According to the Church Urban Fund (CUF), the Parish has a population of just under 8000 people with over 45% being non-white British. (By contrast Wolverhampton, according to the 2021 Census, has approximately 32% non-white with 18% described as Asian.) Recently, there has been a significant influx of people from Africa though this is not yet reflected in Census data.

Declarations of people's faith within the Parish, reveal plenty of potential for evangelism with 46% claiming to be Christian but interestingly **32% claiming to have no faith** (an increase from the 25% reported in the 2011 census). The next biggest faith group is Muslim at 6.5%.

The Parish has a significant number of residents nearer the bottom of the **socio-economic** ladder, as reflected in many of the measures of social deprivation as in the current CUF Report which shows that our Parish is in the bottom quartile for Child, Pensioner & Working Age poverty. The report states that the Parish is among the most deprived in the country, being in the **bottom 15% for deprivation** [ranked 1611/12239; based on Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019) & Census data (2021)]. There is a rate of lone parenthood of over 25% and just under 40% of people report living on their own.

Wolverhampton has a multi-campus University reportedly having approximately 25,000 students, many non-UK born.

THE CONGREGATION:

Our Usual Sunday Attendance (USA) at our principal Sunday morning services were: -

YEAR	Average Total	Average (& Median) No. Adults	Average (& Median) No. ≤ 16 yr olds
2024	96.7	79.9 (73)	16.8 (16)
2023	95.9	80.5 (77)	15.3 (14)
2022	84.4	69.1 (66)	15.3 (14)
2021*	61.7	50.3 (49)	11.4 (12)

*The 2021 figures exclude 11 Sundays when no face-to-face services were held due to Covid restrictions.