

St Mary's Market Drayton Background Information



Thank you for your interest in the post of Church Operations Manager at St Mary's, here in Market Drayton. This is a completely new post for our church, as we seek to create a structure that will support and enable our growth in mission to our town. We hope the following information will help you in your discernment of whether God is calling you to join us.

About Market Drayton

The population of Market Drayton is approx 12,000, making it the third largest market town in Shropshire. There are a number of large local employers: Müller Yogurt & Desserts, Palethorpes (now part of Addo Food Group) and Culina (storage and distribution). Many still work in local agriculture. On the outskirts of town are HMPYOI Stoke Heath and military barracks Tern Hill.

The town has a number of schools: Market Drayton Infant School; Market Drayton Junior School; Longlands Primary School (in parish); The Grove Secondary School (in parish); Mount Lane Day Care and Nursery (in parish). There is an open-air market (Wednesdays) and a number of annual music, arts and food festivals. The town also has a small and popular theatre (Festival Drayton Centre) and successful microbrewery (Joules). For a small town we are well supplied with shops and places to eat.

St Mary's Parish occupies the eastern half of the town, with a population of around 5000. There is a range of housing including new executive housing, 1960's council housing and a large proportion of houses built before the 20th century. A number of new estates are currently being built locally. One of the areas of social housing in the parish is recognised as being an area of high deprivation.

St Mary's Church

St Mary's has an electoral roll of 139, with an average Sunday attendance (pre-pandemic) of around 80-90. The congregation is made up predominantly of those of retirement age, with few under the age of 50. A small handful of children attend the Sunday services. Our Messy Church congregation has just re-started post-pandemic in a new monthly time-slot on a Tuesday after school. We have had around 30+ children at this.

Pre-pandemic, St Mary's pattern of services, comprised:

- Sunday 8.30am BCP Holy Communion (now held at 9.00am)
- Sunday 10.30am CW Holy Communion or Morning Worship (now offering a Zoom option)
- Sunday 6.30pm monthly Iona Communion (yet to re-start)
- Sunday 4.00pm bi-monthly Messy Church (now monthly on a Tuesday at 3.30pm) or Café Worship (yet to re-start)
- Thursday 10.00am BCP Holy Communion

St Mary's has several homegroups, an active Mother's Union branch, a Girls' Friendly Society company and a popular monthly community coffee morning. We have run a number of courses such as Alpha, Puzzling Questions and The Happiness Lab. Two members of the congregation are committed Waterways Chaplains on the local canal.

The church is blessed with healthy finances. Our Parish Share (£59, 958) is paid in full and on time. The church is well-maintained and fabric projects over the past few years have included: the installation of new toilets; ramps in aisle, wheelchair accessible pew, audio visual equipment and a new boiler. We are currently planning the restoration of the vestry. A Quinquennial Inspection has just been completed and whilst the church is generally in good condition, there will be a number of maintenance projects to be done in line with the conclusions of this inspection.



Our Parish Rooms are an important community asset, managed by a small committee, including a paid, part-time bookings administrator and a caretaker. It hosts a number of regular groups, such as dance classes and Singing for the Brain, as well as community events and parties. It is also a key venue for church activities. Currently the Parish Rooms host the local Foodbank and CAP debt advice centre. St Mary's played a vital role in setting up these organisations with our local Churches Together and have remained committed supporters, acting as employers of the local managers for both the Foodbank and CAP debt centre. The Foodbank is part of the Trussell Trust network and has, so far, operated under St Mary's charity number. They are currently developing a strategy which will see them become their own Charitable Incorporated Organisation and possibly rent their own premises.

Our Vision and Plans

Over the past couple of years, we have been through a process of articulating our church family values and discerning our purpose and vision.

Our values: we seek to be a church that is:

Passionate for God; Outward-looking; Welcoming; Loving; Generous and Courageous

Our purpose is:

to enable people **to know Jesus, love Jesus and live for Jesus.**

Our vision is:

to see our town transformed through the love of Christ.

Some of our plans to embed these values, purpose and vision have been hampered by the restrictions of the pandemic; but this will be an ongoing process.

On and off, over the past few years our PCC has been thinking about how we deepen our discipleship and reach out to our community. Recently we have been through a process of paring down all the ideas we've generated, using our vision, purpose and values to guide us and trying to discern God's priorities for us at this moment in time. We have also been working on a structure for our PCC which will support our aims.

We have identified the following priorities, which are in the early stages of planning:

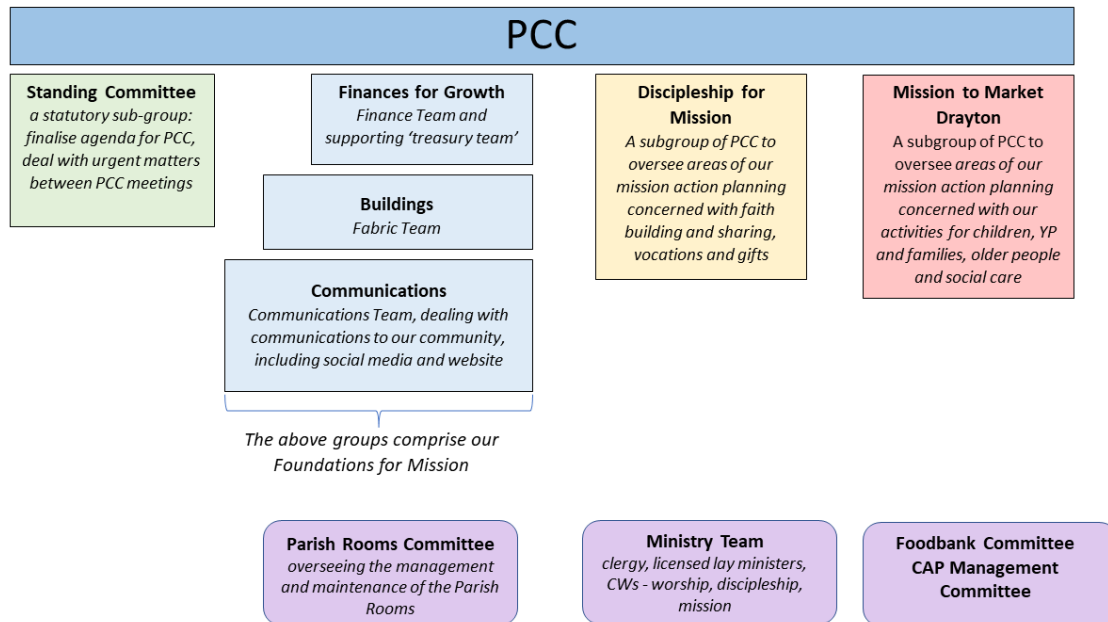
ACORN: Developed by Michael Harvey (the person behind Back to Church Sunday), ACORN is a spiritual discipline we are hoping to encourage as many people in the church to put into practice. It is a way of developing both mission and discipleship, as it encourages us to engage in conversations with those outside of the church family and be aware of where God is already at work in people's lives.



St Mary’s ‘Pathway’: We want to be more intentional about how we integrate newcomers into our church family and help people embark on a pathway to grow in their faith, discover their gifts and find ways of using those gifts to serve God’s kingdom.

‘Street Pastors’: We want to explore how we might help to transform our town, by helping to address some of the problems associated with drug-taking and anti-social behaviour. This might be through some kind of ‘Street Pastors’ initiative or similar, working together with other churches in the town.

Subgroups of the PCC and other supporting teams/committees:



Shaping for Mission

Shaping for Mission (SfM) is Lichfield Diocese’s initiative to ensure each deanery (group of local churches) develops a vision and plan for working together more effectively in mission to our communities. St Mary’s is part of Hodnet Deanery. The vision we have recently developed is that we will be a deanery that is growing deeper in Christ, growing together in unity and growing out into our communities. The next stage of the SfM process will see each deanery develop a mission action plan. We anticipate an important element of this plan will involve St Mary’s working closely with other churches in the area, as we seek to share resources and support each other in mission.

The Church Operations Manager

The Church Operations Manager will fulfil a key leadership role in St Mary’s, providing practical operational support to the Vicar and Churchwardens, so they can focus on leading the PCC and the rest of the church in achieving our purpose and vision.

Thank you once again for considering this role and we look forward to hearing from you soon.