

# Parish Profile

## Kingswinford St Mary

Including the churches of  
**St Mary's Kingswinford and  
Church of the Ascension, Wall Heath**



**Role: Pioneer Priest**

# Pioneer Priest in Kingswinford and Wall Heath

## Introduction & vision

Thank you for your interest in the role of Pioneer Priest in Kingswinford and Wall Heath. This is an extremely exciting time for us. Having been successful in receiving funding from SMIBB we are proactively working on growing multiple new worshipping communities, substantially increasing the number of children and young people worshipping in our parish, and growing our outreach to those parts of the parish where the church has not traditionally been found.

Before I get into our hopes and dreams for our parish, I want to give a guarantee that we are genuinely looking for a pioneer. We want someone who can challenge us to think about what we can offer and where we can offer it. We want you to exercise the pioneer ministry which God has called you to and journey alongside you in this. The profile touches upon what we offer now but in many ways the pages are blank for the future so that you can have the freedom to be led by the Spirit to build what needs building so that this parish is alive and thriving and flourishing in a 1000 years' time. We are a sacramental church and believe that a pioneer would be able to fully engage with sacramental ministry in its broadest sense to show people the mystery and beauty of God in their lives today.

I have been the priest in charge here for almost three years and in that time we have seen a real desire to emerge out of the pandemic and set ourselves up to be healthy and sustainable churches. We recognise that we need support in this and be prepared to take ourselves out of our comfort zones so that we can meet the needs of God's people as we find them today and it was this which led to the proposals put to SMIBB.

We are richly blessed by a vibrant and engaged community in the parish seen in the many events which take place here such as a huge carnival, a large parade for Remembrance Sunday, an active Foodbank Hub and various groups which help to stop isolation. This community energy is something we can easily tap into and we want our pioneer priest to be a well know figure locally and a key community leader.

One thing I have recognised across Kingswinford and Wall Heath is that the parish is made up of a series of housing estates. Mainly from the 1960s and 1970s but also newer ones with a substantial new housing estate being built now on the edge of the parish. These

estates form their own communities and yet are mostly untouched by the church and so would offer a great opportunity for a pioneer to work with. We also have a number of pubs, two church primary schools, three other primary schools and a secondary school. All of these present opportunities for our outreach and the creation of new worshipping communities.

We have also recently appointed a Children and Families Worker, Sian Morgan, and the fruits of her work are already being seen and more information on this can be found later in the profile. In July we will also be joined by a full-time curate, Chris Smith, who already has extensive experience in building new worshipping communities. We are also blessed by four Readers in the parish and six authorised lay ministers plus one in training. Together this ministry teams offers a firm foundation for our future work.

Kingswinford and Wall Heath are great places to live and minister in and I have very much found a home here and have been embraced by the local community and I know the same welcome would be given to whoever becomes our Pioneer Priest.

Both churches are inclusive with Church of the Ascension being part of the Inclusive Church network and we would expect anyone wanting to work with us to uphold these values rooted firmly in an inclusive theology.

Our parish patron is the Blessed Virgin Mary and as we are inspired by her discipleship, we recognise that this our 'fiat' moment, the moment where we say yes to God: yes to what the future will bring, yes to being challenged and yes to being led by the Holy Spirit to new adventures in his name. If you believe your own 'fiat' is the same as ours then we look forward to your application. In the meantime, be assured of our prayers for you and the people you currently minister to.



Fr Adam Hadley

# The Diocese of Worcester



The Diocese of Worcester covers an area of 671 square miles and includes parishes in Worcestershire, the Metropolitan Borough of Dudley, and a few parishes in northern Gloucestershire, south-east Wolverhampton and Sandwell. It has around 170 parishes and 280 church buildings, together with 100 church schools. The diocese is divided into two archdeaconries, with six deaneries.

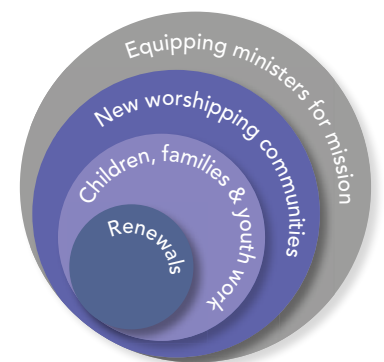


Our diocesan vision is to grow as Kingdom People, sharing the good news of Jesus' love in Worcestershire and Dudley. As the body of Christ, we join together to worship God creatively, make disciples, share hope, and transform communities as we live out values of love, compassion, justice and freedom to bring about the kingdom of God on earth.

## Priorities 2023 – 2030

### Over the next few years, we aim to:

- **Double** the number of children and young people worshipping in our churches
- Create **100 new worshipping communities** offering a range of ways for people to come to faith and worship God. (eg Forest Church / Café Church / Walking Church)
- **Invest in the renewal** of around a dozen churches to ensure that each major area of population has at least one church with 150 people attending weekly, enabling them to support other local churches.
- Underpin these by investing in our clergy and lay leaders, providing **training and development** opportunities to enable them to grow and feel supported and equipped for mission.



**One size doesn't fit all** - we want to strengthen local churches and encourage and resource them to explore what it might mean to grow in health and sustainability in their context as they worship God, make disciples, share hope, and transform communities.

We share a vision for a church which enables its people to be:

- Deeply rooted in prayer and study of the scriptures
- Renewed and transformed by regular worship
- Equipped to witness to the gospel of love, compassion, justice and freedom
- Dedicated to helping children, young people and young adults to belong and be nurtured in faith
- Devoted to growing deeply in discipleship, offering our time and talents and money to God
- Resourced and released to minister to others
- Ready to engage with and serve our community
- Committed to making our buildings fit for purpose as a spiritual and community resource.

[Download a pdf of our full diocesan transformation strategy.](#)

The Greater Dudley Deanery (GDD) was formed during a diocesan reorganisation in 2021. The Deanery covers the whole of the Metropolitan Borough of Dudley along with a handful of parishes in Sandwell, Wolverhampton and Worcestershire. This makes the deanery relatively large nationally, and the largest by population in the diocese. The benefit of a larger deanery is the greater opportunity for team working between clergy and churches, and for drawing suitably significant groups together for training.

The Deanery is led by a Deanery Leadership Team (DLT) which includes an Area Dean, two Sub-Deans, and up to five lay members. The DLT guides the agenda for the Deanery Synod, and represents the deanery at certain diocesan meetings.

The expectation is that Deanery Synod acts as a focus and stimulus for parishes to deliver the mission priorities of the diocese. Deanery Synod meetings serve as a place of mutual support, encouragement and challenge to lift individual churches beyond the parochial and broaden understandings of mission. Increasingly churches work together, sharing resources, and opening up new opportunities for mission.

The Deanery Chapter, of over 30 licensed ministers, is primarily a place of mutual support and encouragement, as well as a place to discuss matters of business. The Chapter meets every 4/5 weeks over lunch, and meetings are well attended. The DLT works closely with the Diocesan training department to provide training for clergy and laity at all levels of ministry.

The task of growing healthy and sustainable churches in the Greater Dudley Deanery is challenging. Through good, collaborative working within and between parishes, between clergy and laity, and between Deanery and Diocese, along with a great deal of prayer, we face the challenge and celebrate together as God's Kingdom grows.

## About the renewals

The Diocese of Worcester has embarked on a new 'Transformation' strategy that seeks to become a numerically larger church in 2030 compared to 2019. Under God's grace, the Diocese hopes to realise the following three strategic priorities:

1. Renew churches in each major area of population to ensure there is at least one church with 150 people attending weekly, enabling them to support other local churches.
2. Double the number of children and young people worshipping in our churches.
3. Create 100 new worshipping communities offering a range of ways for people to come to faith.

To support Priority 1, the Diocese has identified seven urban churches to be part of a 'Renewals' programme, which seeks to grow existing church communities. To help deliver this programme, the Diocese has secured £6.8m funding from the national church's Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board (SMMIB). From this, each renewal church will be equipped to employ new staff, carry out improvements to their buildings, and contribute towards the costs of ministry and overheads over a 5-year period.

Both St Mary's and Church of Ascension have been identified as renewal churches and will play a key part towards each of the Transformation priorities, in particular Priority 1 to ensure they provide a healthy growing church that serves the populations of Kingswinford and Wall Heath. With the benefit of this funding, it is hoped both churches will develop and grow, make new disciples, and support other churches in the local area.

To see the most recent press release on this please follow this link:

[www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/first-churches-in-greater-dudley-deanery-awardedfunds-to-aid-renewal-plans.php](http://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/first-churches-in-greater-dudley-deanery-awardedfunds-to-aid-renewal-plans.php)

## The Parish

The Parish of Kingswinford is part of the Greater Dudley Deanery and is in the Diocese of Worcester. There are two churches in the parish, St Mary's Church in Kingswinford and the Church of The Ascension in Wall Heath. There are two Church of England schools in the parish – St Mary's C of E (VC) Primary and Church of the Ascension C of E (VC) Primary.

St Mary's and the Church of the Ascension have their own DCC and a joint PCC.

Each church has its own character and individuality bringing different gifts to the community we serve. We enjoy coming together and working together but we are not clones of each other and are committed to offering diversity in what we offer.

## Kingswinford & Wall Heath

Kingswinford and Wall Heath are busy residential and commercial communities of 25,000 people of every age and is part of the Black Country, although it is situated on the edge of the countryside with access to many beauty spots. The housing is mainly owner occupied with some council housing properties. There are five primary schools and one secondary school in the parish. We also have a link with a special school just over the border in Wordsley.

We have a mix of independent shops, four major supermarkets, petrol stations, pubs and restaurants and the Merry Hill shopping centre is three miles away. Five other churches are situated within Kingswinford: a Roman Catholic church, a Methodist church and three non-denominational churches. Employment is a mix of engineering, commercial, retail, educational and hospital workers. The local hospitals are Russells Hall Hospital, Dudley and the Corbett Hospital, Stourbridge. Our community is very active local community with a Royal British Legion, Air Training Corps and Scouting and Guiding organisations.

## Transport Links

Several buses pass through Kingswinford and Wall Heath, linking us to other local towns of Dudley, Stourbridge, Brierley Hill and Wolverhampton, and there are excellent road links to the M5, M6 and M42 motorways. Stourbridge Junction is the nearest railway station, with links to Worcester and Birmingham, and the Wolverhampton main line station gives access to the north and south of the country and London.

## St Mary's Church

St Mary's Church is a Grade 2 listed building and featured in the Domesday Book. The oldest part of the church was built in 1187 and was added to by the Victorians. It still retains its Norman tympanum of St Michael slaying the dragon which brings in people who want to see it. The church stands on the south side of a large open graveyard which sees many people walking through each day and this presents excellent opportunities for conversations about faith and being able to offer pastoral care. The church can easily hold 350 people and when needed has been host to much larger services.

There is also an unopened crypt and we have a real desire to open this and investigate whether it could be used for educational purposes.

St Mary's is three miles west of Dudley in the West Midlands. It forms a picturesque back drop to a quiet cul-de-sac on the north side of the Dudley Road (A4101) and is situated approximately ½ mile east from the main village of Kingswinford. It is 1.5 miles from the Vicarage for the Pioneer Priest.

The church is home to a mixed SATB (4 part) choir who sing voluntarily for our traditional services. We are affiliated with the RSCM and use 'Sunday by Sunday' to help with our musical choices. We employ a Director of Music who plans the music, trains and conducts the choir. We also have an organist who plays for our services, weddings and funerals.



Our church is also home to an enthusiastic band of ringers of all ages and abilities, led by our tower captain. Throughout the year, they ring for Sunday worship and special services, such as the Royal British Legion Remembrance Service and for weddings.

Attached to the church is a church centre built in 1974. Within the centre there is a fully fitted kitchen (which will soon be updated) and toilets alongside baby changing facilities. The centre is a valuable asset for social and other church activities, and is hired out for community use to provide valuable income for its upkeep.



## Church of the Ascension

The Church of the Ascension, Wall Heath was built in 1892, as a "daughter" mission church in the parish of St Mary's Kingswinford. Located on the A449 Wolverhampton to Worcester route, the church occupies a central position at crossroads in the centre of Wall Heath and is very much at the heart of the village.

In 1989 a church hall and toilets were added, and this is let to community groups during the day and evening most weekdays. The building itself is relatively compact and has a capacity for around 100 worshippers, it has a light and airy interior, and offers a unique welcoming experience. The church is set in its own lawned area, but does not have a graveyard or a car park. Local facilities for parking adjacent to the shops or the local school playground are generally sufficient, even for larger events. The nave has comfortable chairs, which allows for a degree of flexibility in the worship space. There is also a dedicated children's area in the northwest corner of the church. The church is well maintained, has had new lighting and sound systems installed in the last ten years, and is a significant physical feature of the village.

We have just had the choir stalls removed from the chancel and this has opened up a large space for us to explore holding new types of worship.

## Patterns of Worship at St Mary's

### Sundays:

- 10am Sung Eucharist (1st & 3rd Sundays) or Morning Prayer (2nd & 4th Sundays)
- 12.30pm Baptisms (2nd & 4th Sundays)
- 6.30pm Evensong, Benediction with Taizé or Memorial Service

### Mondays:

- 8.30am Morning Prayer
- 10am Mainly Music (pre school worship)
- 4.15pm Singing Angels (primary age choir)

### Tuesdays:

- 8.30am Morning Prayer
- 10am Said Eucharist with homily

### Wednesdays:

- 8.30am Morning Prayer

Services for festivals are held throughout the year and a full Triduum is held.

## Patterns of Worship at Church of the Ascension

### Sundays:

- 10am Sung Eucharist (2nd & 4th Sundays) or Morning Prayer (1st & 3rd Sundays)
- 12.30pm Baptisms (1st Sunday)
- 4pm Jigsaw – informal worship followed by food (1st Sunday)

### Mondays:

- 5pm Evening Prayer

### Tuesdays:

- 5pm Evening Prayer

### Wednesdays:

- 10.00am Eucharist with hymns and homily
- 5pm Evening Prayer

### Thursdays:

- 10am Mainly Music (pre school worship)

## Across our two churches

### Occasional Offices

We are popular churches for occasional offices and figures for these are available if you would like to see them.

### Pastoral Care

We have a number of ministers who maintain contact with those who are sick or housebound and this is an important part of what we do. We also visit and lead services in three care homes in the parish.

### Study Groups

We have held the occasional study group and this is something we would like to further develop in the future.

### Schools Work

We have an active ministry with many of our schools. Fr Adam is the ex officio governor at St Mary's Primary School and Chris Smith, the incoming curate, will become the ex officio governor at Church of the Ascension Primary School.

Currently Fr Adam leads one session of collective worship in the two church schools each half term and reads a Bible story to the reception classes in each school once a month. He has also supported RE lessons where requested.

The Open the Book team visit four out of five of the local primary schools each half term.

At Church of the Ascension School we run an after-school Church Club every other week during term time and have around 23 children attending each session.

Throughout the year schools attend our two churches for lessons and services and we are just in the process of beginning a series of 'experiences' for our two church schools to teach about key festivals throughout the Christian year.

### Messy Church

Our Children and Families Worker has recently started running Messy Church at both churches and this is proving to be popular and we are exploring how this could further be developed into a new worshipping community.

### Support

As already outlined, we have a strong Ministry Team and active volunteers. Both churches have committed Churchwardens, Treasurers, Secretaries and an active volunteer base which is steadily growing. As part of the SMIBB grant we have also been able to appoint a half-time parish administrator, Operations Manager and a Children and Families Worker.

There is also funding within the SMIBB grant for training, startup costs and overheads. Expenses will be paid in full. Worcester Diocese is committed to ongoing training and support of its clergy.

An annual retreat is strongly encouraged. As the new team is appointed we will meet regularly for mutual support, to pray and to coordinate our vision for our work. It is also hoped that way days and a retreat will help us bring us closer together in the work of the Kingdom.

### Children & Families Worker

Hello, I am Sian, and I am the newly appointed Children and Families Worker working equally between both churches. My role is funded for 5 years as part of the SMIBB bid.



Having previously worked as a Mission Enabler in the Diocese this is an exciting opportunity for me to really build the children and families work in the parish, make connections between families, community, school and church and lead our fantastic team of volunteers.

Since beginning this role in September, I have continued our mainly music groups which are popular preschool music groups, supported the ongoing work of our church club afterschool club at Church of the Ascension Primary, started our own children's choir Singing Angels, started messy Church at both churches and am just about to begin the experience events with both church primary schools.

I am passionate about children and families and keen to grow the number of children in our churches not just at our services on a Sunday morning. My dreams are for the churches to be alive with children learning, worshipping and serving their community all week and for us to really be able to meet families where they are, without expecting them to just fit into what we already offer. The role of Pioneer Priest will be key to this work, and I am really excited for where God will take us.

### Pioneer Priest

The Pioneer Priest will play a vital role in the mission and outreach efforts of our Anglo- Catholic parish. Working under the oversight of the Incumbent, the Pioneer Priest will harness the growing energy for mission within the parish and contribute to the formation of new incarnational mission initiatives.

This role will also help individuals to explore their calling and vocations, as well as identifying and training volunteers to take on leadership roles within the New Worshipping Community and other missional activities.

#### Main Responsibilities:

- **Mission and Outreach:** Collaborate with the parish leadership to define and execute mission objectives. Form relationships with residents in the multiple estates within the parish to better understand their needs and foster community engagement.
- **Community Presence:** Ensure dedicated and consistent presence on the various estates of the parish, fostering connections and building trust with residents.
- **New Worshipping Communities (NWC):** Conceive, plan, and launch a NWC with a charismatic, sacramental flavour. Relaunch our previously successful intergenerational 'Jigsaw' NWC. Lead and nurture these communities as they grow. Identify and train volunteers to take on leadership roles within the communities to ensure their sustainability beyond the lifetime of the role.
- **Vocation Discernment:** Facilitate opportunities for individuals within the parish to explore their calling and vocations. Provide guidance and support to those discerning their roles in ministry.
- **Volunteer Development:** Identify, recruit, and train volunteers for various missional activities within the parish. Equip and empower volunteers to take on leadership positions, ensuring continuity in mission and outreach efforts.
- **Pastoral Care:** Provide pastoral care and spiritual guidance to the wider community, demonstrating a compassionate and inclusive approach.
- **Collaboration:** Work closely with existing parish team members, other clergy, and laity to enhance the parish's overall mission efforts. Collaborate with volunteers and lay leaders to support outreach initiatives.

#### Person Specification:

- Ordained Anglican priest
- Sympathetic to Anglo-Catholic theology and practice
- Proven experience in pioneering and leading incarnational mission initiatives
- Ability to work effectively in a team and build strong relationships within the parish community
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Demonstrated leadership and organisational abilities
- Additional experience of leading Catholic charismatic expressions of worship is desirable.

### The Vicarage

A vicarage within the parish is provided as part of this role.



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The Church of England is for everyone, and it is a priority for us to reflect the diversity of the community the Church serves across the whole diocese. We welcome all applications from interested and suitably qualified people, and particularly welcome applications from those of global majority heritage and people with disabilities.



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