

Newcastle Holy Cross Church

Parish Profile April 2021



Whittington Grove Fenham Newcastle upon Tyne NE5 2QP

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INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the PCC the congregation and the churchwardens we welcome those considering becoming our priest in charge.

We believe this vacancy comes at an exciting time in the life of Holy Cross, presenting a challenging and rewarding opportunity for a future Incumbent to work creatively in the life of the church and community.

Holy Cross Church has been serving the people of Fenham since 1936, firstly in a wooden building, then in the current imposing Church, the tower of which dominates the skyline to the West of the City of Newcastle upon Tyne.

The vision of the Diocese of Newcastle, led by the Bishop, the Right Reverend Christine Hardman, is “Growing Church Bringing Hope”.

We at Holy Cross are committed to this vision and to the diocesan goals of reaching those we currently do not; growing in numbers, disciples, and influence; and achieving sustainable finances. These goals have been at the forefront of our past mission plans and are still the challenges that lie ahead, as we seek to share the Good News of Jesus Christ and to grow his Kingdom here in Fenham.

We are a moderately-sized congregation of loyal, kind, caring, prayerful and generous people who gather together and enjoy fellowship.

We seek to serve God and to enable others to share God’s love. Many of us have worshipped in this church for decades while others of us are relative newcomers, and we are all-inclusive in our acceptance of people.

We feel we are loving, resilient and adaptable, approachable and child friendly. Many lay people use their gifts and skills to serve God and the Church, which we consider to be one of our great strengths.

The Parish Prayer

Bless us, Lord.
Bless our Parish.
Inspire our worship.
Fill us with love
and send us out
in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory. Amen



OUR RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

The Impact Of Pandemic Restrictions

- Many of our congregation are in the higher risk groups which has meant many having or choosing to self isolate for over a year.
- Our Church building has been closed during times of lockdown and between January and April 2021.
- Our Parish Hall has also been closed and no social groups or fundraising activities have met other than online. All of which has meant a dramatic drop in fundraising and a huge impact on church and social fellowship.
- Income has also fallen due to loss of collections at services.

The Positives

- We have proven to be a supportive resilient church family.
- Our Reader, and Wardens, together with the Worship and Nurture group and Youth Church leaders, have done a fantastic job of organising services and other meetings using Zoom and Facebook.
- After conducting a risk assesment we opened the church for Christmas Eve, Midnight Mass and Christmas Morning. We closed again until Easter Sunday and are pleased to have re-opened for Worship as the risks reduced.
- The Christingle Service organised by the Worship and Nurture Group was well attended on zoom. A socially distanced crib service was held with the church children operating muppets to act out the nativity.
- Meetings such as PCC on zoom, have worked well. Most people have enjoyed taking part in online meetings and worship as well as seeing each other on screen.
- We have ensured that everyone self isolating is contacted by phone. Shopping and other help, has been given to those who needed it during these difficult times.
- We continued to stay in contact; our Weekly Newsletter and Order of Service are delivered to those who do not have online access.
- Our monthly parish magazine continues to be published in print and online and we are in the process of developing our new web site (holycrossfenham@church.com) as well as improving use of our facebook pages.
- Our fabric group continues to take good care of our buildings.
- Income has been sustained from regular giving and rents from the curate's house.
- We are grateful to have been well supported by our Diocese and Deanery during our period of vacancy.

OUR FINANCES

There is an established pattern of giving from the congregation. We have also been fortunate to have received some generous Legacies over the past two years as well as monies from the Bishop's Fund and the Diocese. There is a monthly rental income from the former curate's house which is allocated to general funds.

There were significant effects on the pattern of income during 2020 due to COVID19 and subsequent closing of the church. Although Planned Giving matched the previous year loose offerings along with receipts from Church Activities including rental income from church hall rentals, have been seriously eroded or non-existent.

Although our financial situation looks very healthy, following an inspection by the Fire Service, we are anticipating potentially large expenditure in 2021 which at the time of writing is not certain or quantifiable . We are also hoping to replace the 30 year old unserviceable gas heating system. We do have the necessary funds in general funds to complete much of this work.

Our pattern of Regular Giving from Church Funds has been over the past two years: Bede Food Bank, the Children's Society, Safe Families (a local Refuge for Women and Children) and the West End Refugee Service. The first three by monthly standing order. Amounting in total to around £2,500.

Special efforts separate to these have been our Christmas Collections, and Harvest Festival Collections.

Due to the loss of income we were unable to pay in full our Parish Share in 2020, the first time in a number of years and we fell short of the requested £39,391 by paying £30,000.

Our Treasurer, who has recently retired, has ensured sound management of our finances over many years. We need to identify someone to succeed in the role.

Our Vision



To further the potential of Holy Cross in the community as a visible reflection of God's presence.

To broaden our reach in the community and wider world. Be more engaging and inclusive, bringing together the congregation and community in the delivery of God's message.

Continue to increase the diversity of our congregation to reflect that of the local community, continuing to welcome and encourage people from all backgrounds and age groups.

Build on our reputation as a welcoming inclusive church and community in which everyone is valued, respected and cared for in the love of Christ

Build on our current strengths and assets in response to changing times and needs. Making better use of our facilities and assets as perhaps a "community hub".

Develop innovative, creative ways of worship, in both style and content, in ministry and service.

To provide an environment in which people of all ages are able to grow in spiritual knowledge, through sunday school, confirmation, bible study and prayer groups. Providing strong support for our children and young people both before and after confirmation.

Encourage everyone to be actively involved in the life of the church and community, to share his or her skills and talents.

Increase our involvement in ecumenical worship.



Encourage attendance of parents with children, who are too young to attend sunday school, by the provision of an activity area within the body of the church for use during services. Numbers permitting we have a creche for very young children.

ARE YOU THE ONE

We pray the person who will become our new interim minister will bring a fresh perspective to our church:

- We would look to the person appointed to be someone who will lead us spiritually and work with us creatively to further develop the potential of Holy Cross in the community as a visible reflection of God's presence.
- Bringing a consistent priestly presence providing stability and support to the congregation and the parish after being in vacancy since September 2018.
- Re-kindle our enthusiasm, re-build our confidence, help to identify vision and a new direction (a "re-set button").
- Teaching and nurturing our faith journeys for our young people and adults. Able to identify and bring out the gifts of others to work together in worship and pastoral care. Building fellowship among the worshipping community.
- Enabling meaningful and welcoming patterns of worship – both in holding to valued tradition and in exploring potential new and creative opportunities. Identify the particular needs of our local community, developing Holy Cross as a 'community hub'.
- Committed to collaborative models of ministry. Helping to identify ways we can improve our work with local churches, supporting and strengthening each other.
- Help us manage and prepare for potential change and re-organisation.
- As priest in charge in partnership with lay leaders & the PCC. supporting and encouraging people to share the work to be done.
- Enable the parish to be in a stronger position to share mission with others in the deanery.

We look forward to welcoming and supporting whoever you are in what is an exciting opportunity at a pivotal time in the life of our church.

We have always supported our incumbents by paying in full all legitimate working clergy expenses.

We also expect you to take proper holidays and days off.

We will support you in taking time out for training and personal professional development.



West Fenham

Holy Cross Church resides within the West Fenham area of Newcastle upon Tyne, with a multi-ethnic population. Predominantly white British. A Muslim population of mainly Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin, as well as Eastern European and African ethnic groups. The area has a good range of local amenities including; highly rated schools, doctors, dentists, vets, library, shops, restaurant and cafes. The church also has links with Fenham Association of Residents (FAR). Incumbents have traditionally been a governor of the local primary school (Stocksfield Primary School) with whom we have had good relations and support.

There are frequent bus services to the city centre and surrounding areas which also link to the Metro Rail System, as well as excellent national and international air, rail and sea links via Newcastle International Airport, Newcastle Central Station and North Sea Ferries.



Housing in the parish is a mix of privately owned, rented and local authority owned, built mainly during the 1930s and 1950s. Many of which have been or are currently being updated and extended.



Newcastle city centre is a 10 minute drive by car or bus. It and the surrounding area is well served by excellent nationally renowned facilities including shopping, (Metrocentre and Eldon Square) The Sage, Baltic Art Centre, Theatres, Museums, Cathedrals and Churches. In 2021 Newcastle hospitals, have once again been rated as excellent by 101 best in the world.



Denton Dene, Jesmond Dene and Hadrian's walk are literally on our doorstep



The beautiful North East Coast is only 25 minutes away. As well as fantastic beaches, there are the many historic castles of Northumberland. Holy Island, Hadrian's Wall, Housesteads, Kielder Forest and much more, all within easy travelling distance.



Our Church



In the mid 1930s, Fenham was the focus of great building activity with many local authority and private houses under construction. Holy Cross Church has served the people of Fenham for 83 years. Over the years there have been a number of additions including: The Jubilee Hall, St. Mary's Porch and The Parish Hall.

Holy Cross Church is located on Whittington Grove. It was consecrated on 14th September 1936 by Dr Harold Ernest Bilborough, Bishop of Newcastle. Those who attended the consecration service recall that, despite wet weather, more than 650 people turned out for this significant event.

The land was given by Mr J.R. Blackett-Ord who was the major landowner in the area. The Blackett-Ord family also paid for the construction of the church. The architect was Henry Hicks who was much inspired by the 'Modern Movement' in Europe between the wars. The church building, giving an impression of great simplicity, in fact achieves this effect through creative and highly skilled planning of line and form.



The church organ is an instrument of some renown and used regularly during many of our services.



Jubilee Hall

Built in the 1950s, originally as a School-room. Extensively updated and renamed as part of a project to celebrate our Diamond Jubilee in 1996. A very useful and well used facility.



The Vicarage

A detached 4 bedroomed property. Two reception rooms, study, and attached single garage. One bathroom and downstairs cloakroom with WC. Double glazing and gas central heating. A comfortable family residence. Gardens to the front and enclosed large rear garden with lawn and apple trees.



Parish Hall

The parish hall is a well equipped facility with a kitchen, and a small theatre stage. A substantial storage extension was added in 2012. The hall is used extensively by the church and many community and religious groups.



Curate's House

A three bedroomed semi detached house with study and a single garage. Currently rented out. Providing useful additional income.

Life At Holy Cross



We are members of Churches Together in Fenham Group which meets regularly and shares worship, social activities and projects such as Christmas card production and distribution.

We hold regular fundraising events for various organisations, charity groups and to support the fabric and life of our church; Summer Fayre, Santa's Coffee Morning,

We support the local food bank which is based in Benwell, by having regular food collections and some of our members are volunteers.

The church is said to have excellent acoustics and as such has in the past, held a number of music recitals as well as a variety of choir services and flower festivals.

Holy Communion is taken to isolated and more infirm members of the congregation including those in our local Care Home. Any member of the congregation who is hospitalised is visited.

Many members of the church family are involved in the running of the church in a variety of roles, each one of value including; Church Wardens, Lay Reader, with permission to officiate, Sidespersons, Altar Party, Intercessors and Organist.

The Standing Committee, currently comprising: Lay Chair, Secretary, Church Warden and two PCC members meet on a regular basis.



There are four subgroups supported by members of the congregation which operate on behalf of the PCC; Worship & Nurture, Fabric, Children & Young People and Social & Outreach.

The congregation support younger members; Sunday school/creche /children's corner, youth church, messy church, uniformed organisations and the toddler group.

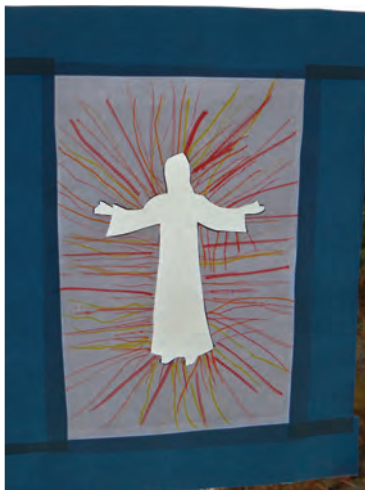


Volunteers help with the maintenance of the church and grounds; cleaners, gardeners and the flower team.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Youth Church service is held twice a month alongside the main service and organises the Family Service. Eucharist on the 1st Sunday of the month. The children help organise and deliver the sermon and select the music which is projected onto a screen with recorded music and singing. We are pleased to say that due to the various initiatives undertaken, child attendance has increased by 40%.

Due to lockdown restrictions the 2020 Christingle service took place on Zoom. Information on which was sent to our uniformed organisations and Stocksfield School. We were fortunate to be able to have a socially distanced crib service in church, booked through Eventbrite, with the church children operating muppets to act out the nativity. Both services were well attended and appreciated



Messy church has continued on our Child Holy Cross Facebook

page with craft and cooking activities. There

are detailed instructions and

photographs, prayer and a song or story relating to the topic.

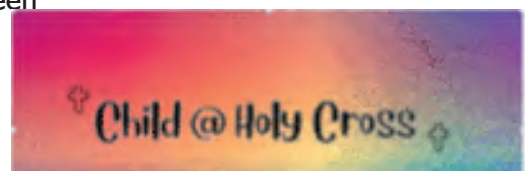
Each Sunday Child Holy Cross provides a bible reading, a modern worship song and activity aimed at our youth church and Sunday school members as well as the wider community. We have also kept in touch with the community with various art displays in the Parish hall windows including: a daily changing window in Holy Week; rainbows; Sea Sunday and Remembrance Day. Contributions

came from all ages of our church family.



Our Palm Sunday Service took place on zoom in 2021 and was attended by both our Bishop the Right Revd. Christine Hardman and our Area Dean, Canon Christine Brown. Both of whom were highly complimentary. Our Bishop was

particularly complimentary about the involvement of our Youth Church members. And about both the content and delivery of the service stating "it was the best she had seen"



Worship at the Church of the Holy Cross, including Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals.

Pattern Of Worship (pre covid 19)

Sunday	8.00 am Holy Eucharist 9.30 am Parish Eucharist with Crèche & Sunday School 6.30 pm Evening Service *
Monday	8.30 am Morning Prayer 2.30 pm Housebound Eucharist (2nd Monday each month)
Tuesday	8.30 am Morning Prayer
Wednesday	8.30 am Morning Prayer 9.30 am Holy Eucharist
Thursday	8.30 am Morning Prayer

*Either Book of Common Prayer Evensong, or a quarterly Taizé Service, Praise in Song or Prayer for Wholeness and Healing.

Current Pattern Of Worship April 2021

Sunday 10 am Parish Eucharist with Crèche & Sunday School

Baptisms Weddings and Funerals

Baptisms take place either during our 10am Parish Eucharist or at 11am on the first Sunday of the month

Funerals

Funerals are undertaken at Holy Cross Church and The West Road Crematorium.
This is not dependent on church attendance.

The following is an indication of the activity at Holy Cross Church during 2019 and 2020

Average attendance at Sunday 10am Parish Eucharist: Adults 50 Children 9

Year	2019	2020
Number Of Baptisms	20	11
Number Of Funerals	4	2
Number Of Weddings	1	0

Social Activities and Groups (pre covid19)

The Parish Hall is adjacent to the church on the corner of Whittington Grove and Lanercost Drive.

The Jubilee Hall is connected to the church building and is accessed internally from the church and externally from Ovington Grove.

The Meeting Room is an upstairs room in the church building. Its use is currently suspended and under review due to potential fire risk assesment improvements and restrictions

What's On	When	Where *
Crèche	Sunday 9.30 am	Jubilee Hall
Sunday School	Sunday 9.30 am	Meeting Room
Youth Church	10am twice a month	Jubilee Hall
Toddler Group	Tuesday 9.00 - 11:15 am	Parish Hall
Brownie Guides	Monday 6.00 - 7.30 pm	Parish Hall-
Beavers	TBC	Scout Hut
Cub Scouts	Thursday 5.45 - 7.15 pm	Scout Hut
Scouts	TBC	Scout Hut, Silver Lonnen
Mothers' Union	1st Monday of the month, 2.00 pm	Parish Hall
Double LL's	2nd Wednesday of the month, 7.00 pm	Parish Hall
Drama Group	Thursday 7.30 pm	Parish Hall
Indoor Bowls	Wednesday 7.00 - 9.00 pm	Parish Hall
Total Therapy (Ladies Group)	Friday evening monthly	Various
Messy Church (Kids & Families)	2nd Saturday bi-monthly 2.00 pm	Parish Hall



