PARISH SUMMARY

- A busy parish located in the heart of the town
- A friendly church, with a warm welcome for all
- An established community with a loyal and committed congregation
- A lively church with a wide range of activities
- Proud of our history and traditions
- Growing links with local schools
- Keen to develop our role within our *Mission Community*
THE LOCALITY

WORKINGTON

Workington is an ancient market and industrial town at the mouth of the River Derwent on the west coast of Cumbria, with magnificent views across the Solway to Scotland and the Irish Sea towards the Isle of Man. It is within easy reach of the western edge of the Lake District National Park.

Some parts of the town north of the river date back to Roman times but it was in the 18th century, with the exploitation of the local iron ore and coal pits, that Workington expanded to become a major industrial town and port. Henry Bessemer introduced his revolutionary steel making process in Workington but in recent years, with the decline of these traditional industries, the town has diversified into other forms of light industry and employment. Iggesund Paperboard, Alcan Packaging and Eastman Chemicals have production sites on the outskirts of the town and Workington’s National Nuclear Laboratory [NNL] employs a team of technical professionals handling the design and manufacture of test rigs and operator training.

St John’s Church stands on the busy thoroughfare of Washington Street at the heart of the town centre surrounded by Victorian terraced housing, originally built to house the influx of industrial workers.

The town centre has been extensively re-developed and now boasts a full range of high street shops, including Debenhams [shown bottom right], Marks & Spencer, Next, River Island and Boots, the Chemist. St John’s Parish has expanded to include Stainburn Ward, consisting of several 1970s and 1980s housing estates and current new builds. A range of national supermarkets and various other outlets including Currys, Halfords, B&Q and Matalan are located on the outskirts of Workington.
THE PARISH OF ST JOHN

TRANSPORT AND RECREATION

Workington has rail links along the Cumbrian coast from Carlisle in the north to Barrow in the south, where mainline connections are available. The A66 road runs from Workington to Penrith, where it joins the M6 motorway and eastward across the Pennines to the Scotch Corner junction with the A1 near Richmond in North Yorkshire.

A sports centre and swimming pool complex is located at Moorclose on the periphery of Workington. However, a new Sports Centre is to be built in a more central location. There is a network of cycle paths which run through the coastal fringe of the town, including a section of the route of the Coast to Coast route along the River Derwent, through Seaton towards Cockermouth. Sailing enthusiasts have a range of options with yachting marinas at Harrington, Whitehaven and Maryport and sailing clubs at Portinscale on Derwent Water and Lake Bassenthwaite. The Lake District fells are within easy reach of Workington and offer fell-walking in some of the most beautiful scenery in the United Kingdom. Whinlatter Forest Park, between Cockermouth and Keswick, has developed an ever-growing selection of mountain biking trails. The Visitor Centre provides annual updates and live nest-cams for Lake Bassenthwaite’s nesting pair of ospreys.

Workington has a flourishing tradition of music and amateur theatre. The Playgoers at the Theatre Royal, Workington Amateur Operatic Society (WAOS) and Workington and District Amateur Musical Society (WADAMS) produce several productions each year. The Plaza Cinema complex at Northside Workington, Kirkgate Arts Centre in Cockermouth and Keswick’s Theatre by the Lake offer a wide range of professional entertainment ranging from folk, jazz and classical music to film and drama.

HEALTH SERVICES

There are five GP practices in Workington, one of which is located within the Community Hospital that also has an Open Access Clinic during the day. Full A&E facilities are located in Whitehaven at the West Cumberland Hospital. Workington has three dental practices and three pharmacies located centrally in the town.
EDUCATION

Within the parish Ashfield Infant [156 pupils] and Junior [246 pupils] Schools provide LEA education for children aged 4 to 11 years. The vast majority of pupils are from White British ethnic backgrounds and the percentage known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. A Smallworld Pre-School, located within the grounds of Ashfield Infant School, provides 26 places and there are several other privately owned nurseries within the town.

Secondary education in Workington is currently being re-organised in order to create a single new, purpose-built school for the town. Stainburn and Southfield Schools will merge in September 2015 and the new academy will be sponsored by William Howard Academy Trust. The Energy Coast University Technical College for students aged 14 – 18 years opened at Lillyhall on the outskirts of Workington in September 2014, in partnership with the University of Cumbria, Gen2 Training and the Nuclear Decommissioning Agency. There is also a Roman Catholic 11 – 16 secondary school in the parish.

ST JOHN’S CHURCH

The Parish of St John, Workington dates from 1823. It was created by Act of Parliament in 1818 as a chapel under the care of the Mother Church, St Michael’s. St John’s, designed by Thomas Hardwick Esq. and built of local sandstone, was one of the new churches built as a thanksgiving for victory at the Battle of Waterloo. The tower was added in 1846 and the interior was redesigned in 1930 by Sir Ninian Comper.

The sanctuary is the focal point of the church. The Baldachino or canopy is gilded with 9 carat gold and the Greek text above the altar contains words from St John’s Gospel. The arabesque above the altar shows the risen Lord with the banner of victory.

The ceiling is decorated with sixteen shields; one group showing the arms of St Mary’s Abbey York, to which the parish belonged until 1544; the arms of the see of Chester, to which the parish belonged until 1856 and the arms of the Diocese of Carlisle.

The stained glass West Window is unusual in that the canopy of the tester in the sanctuary bisects the window. It consists of two separate pictures: the upper representing Christ in glory with attendant angels and the lower depicts the four evangelists.

The land for the new church was given by Mr John Christian Curwen of Workington Hall, who also donated the organ, formerly situated in the chapel at the Hall. In 1881 a parish room was built on to the church in the court behind, at a cost of £580. English Heritage first designated the church and adjoining parish room as a Grade II* listed building in 1951.
THE VICARAGE

Built in the 1980s, the Vicarage is a four bed-roomed detached house close to the town centre, with separate WC and bath/shower room. Downstairs comprises an entrance hall, cloakroom and WC, fitted kitchen and separate utility room, study and two living rooms. The property is centrally heated and double glazed throughout.

WORSHIP

St John’s has a tradition of dignified Eucharistic worship. There is a loyal, largely separate congregation for 8am Communion (said), a larger and more eclectic congregation for Sung Eucharist at 10am and a well-supported midweek Eucharist on Wednesdays at 11am (Common Worship).

During the long tenure of the previous incumbent the style of the Sung Eucharist has become more Catholic, with processions, vestments and the introduction of the Sanctus bell. Incense is used on major saints’ days and festivals of the church. This tradition has been of value in enabling young people who have been recently confirmed to take a role in worship, initially as Acolytes and later as part of the wider team of Servers, lay assistants or members of the choir. Stations of the Cross were installed around the church and these are used during Lent for mid-week worship.
Hymns Old and New replaced Ancient & Modern which has enabled the choir to introduce us to a new selection of relevant music for worship.

During the interregnum we have been able to maintain the existing pattern of services, largely through the kind offices of our NSM Reverend Malcolm Stilwell.

**PATTERN OF SERVICES**

The current pattern of services is:

- **Wednesdays 11.00 am** Holy Communion
- **Sundays 8.00 am** Holy Communion
- **10.00 am** Sung Eucharist
- **Holy Baptism 4th Sunday 10.00 am**

Stations of the Cross Every Wednesday during Lent 7.00 pm

Reserved Communion is available for sick visiting and communion is taken to residential care homes in the parish.

Occasionally during the interregnum a service has been held at 6.00 pm on a Sunday. These have taken the form of Songs of Praise or services using the style of worship from the Taize Community.

Since the vacancy the parish has been working on a process of developing our Mission Action Plan, by an overtly open and inclusive process. Amongst the priorities has been the creation of a Worship Committee to explore the possibilities of varying the style of Sunday worship through Fresh Expressions.

*PARADE SERVICES* (monthly during term-time) are well attended by Brownies, Rainbows, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorer Scouts and Junior Church. They enable the uniformed organisations and youth groups to become involved in the parish Eucharist by contributing readings, songs and other presentations on a relevant theme.

**ST JOHN’S ORCHESTRA** provides the music for our popular Parade services.
Baptisms have also been moved into the parish Eucharist on a monthly basis, enabling the congregation to participate in welcoming the child, godparents, family and friends into the church. Preparation for Baptism involves a home visit by a named member of the congregation and a visit to a Sung Eucharist service by the family.

During the previous incumbency, the Measure for the Ordination of Women passed into Canon Law, and the PCC by majority vote supported the vicar in passing resolutions A and B, and later affiliated the parish to ‘Forward in Faith’. This has since lapsed and since the vacancy the PCC has voted by a two-thirds majority to reject Resolutions A and B and allow the ministry of women at St John’s.

POLICIES

BAPTISM

The Parish has an ‘open door’ baptism policy. Services are usually held on the fourth Sunday of the month during the Eucharist service.

MARRIAGE

St John’s welcomes couples who wish to be married in church.

CONFIRMATION

Children aged 10 years or above and adults from the parish are encouraged to come for confirmation at St John’s. Preparation is carried out by the vicar in the three months prior to the service.
PEOPLE

CHURCHWARDENS AND THE PCC

Currently the parish has two churchwardens, Mr. David Pearson and Mr. Norman Glaister.

The PCC currently has 18 members including the assistant priest and the church wardens and meets on the second Wednesday of every alternate month in the Community Hall. The Standing Committee meets on the intervening second Thursday. In addition there are 2 sub-committees of the PCC namely Fabric and Social. Other individuals have specific responsibilities within the parish including amongst others a Lettings Secretary, Promotion Team, Kitchen Team and Churches Together in Workington.

The PCC aims to support the Vicar in the running of the Parish and encourage the growth of the congregation in their faith. It aims to encourage St John’s in its outreach work in the local community and beyond, also hoping to bring more people in to share the life of the church.

LAY INVOLVEMENT

Lay people are responsible for reading the Old/New Testament lesson and lead the intercessions at the 10am Eucharist. A number of people are licensed to administer the chalice at communion.

St John’s is very fortunate to have a regular organist, Mr Eric Holmes.

CHOIR
There is a thriving church choir which comprises around 16 members, taking an active part in services and also staging concerts and entertainment at parish functions. They have an annual weekend away to broaden their musical repertoire and enjoy R&R together.

The choir is ably led by Mrs Claire Humes.

RECENT CHURCH ATTENDANCES

- **Number of Communicants in 2014**
  Total for 2014  6341

- **Special Service Attendance in 2014 – Number of Communicants**
  Easter  109
  Harvest Festival  76
  Christmas  134

- **Sick communion – annual figure for 2014**
  Sick communion 2014  48

- **Christingle 2014**
  Approximately  100 Christingles distributed

- **Annual Figures for Baptisms etc. 2014**
  Baptisms  17
  Marriages  6
  Confirmations  2
  Funerals (Church)  8
  Funerals (Crem.)  9

- **A more recent snapshot of a typical month is given by the figures for the number of Communicants for four consecutive Sundays in October 2014.**
  5 Oct 2014  73
  12 Oct 2014  57
  19 Oct 2014  89  (Parade Service)
  26 Oct 2014  100

Parade services also have a good attendance from the youngsters belonging to the Uniformed Organisations, which is not fully represented in the number of communicants.

ELECTORAL ROLL

The current electoral roll is 138. The age of the majority of the congregation is over 50, which is largely in keeping with the local area demographic, but there is a fair cross section of ages including a number of young families, who support a small Junior Church on Sundays and SJY? Youth Church.
CHURCH ORGANISATIONS

This is a lively and active parish and there is a full range of activities for people of all ages.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Junior Church</td>
<td>Meets weekly during 10am service on Sundays (except Parade Sunday) and joins the service for communion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainbows</td>
<td>Meet weekly on Tuesdays at 4.45pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brownies</td>
<td>Meet weekly on Tuesdays at 6.00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beavers</td>
<td>Meet weekly on Thursdays at 5.45pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cubs</td>
<td>Meet weekly on Thursdays at 7.00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scouts</td>
<td>Meet weekly on Thursdays at 6.45pm (in Ashfield Junior School)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explorer Scouts</td>
<td>Meet weekly on Mondays at 7.00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SJY? - Youth Church</td>
<td>Meet alternate Mondays, 4.30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Group</td>
<td>Meet monthly on 2nd Tuesdays at 7.30pm, with a full programme of talks and visits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Fellowship</td>
<td>Meet weekly on Tuesdays at 2.00pm</td>
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COMMUNITY HALL USERS

All the above use the Community Hall for their meetings, apart from the Scouts. In addition, the following also use it regularly

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tiny Tots Play</td>
<td>Meets weekly on Thursdays at 9.45am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor Bowling Club</td>
<td>Meets weekly on Mondays at 2.00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tai Chi</td>
<td>Meets weekly on Tuesdays at 10am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramarama</td>
<td>Meets weekly on Fridays at 4.00pm</td>
</tr>
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FINANCES

The Parish offer is and always has been met in full. Parish expenses for the incumbent are paid. Planned giving with an envelope scheme and regular giving by standing order have operated for many years (membership in 2014 was 84 envelopes and 36 standing orders). A substantial part of this income is received under the Gift Aid scheme and the annual tax refund in 2014 was £8,681.

The parish ran a successful Stewardship campaign, during October 2014, with very encouraging responses from parishioners.
MISSION ACTION PLAN

The Parish has a Mission Action Plan which was initiated at a Parish ‘Away Day’ in June 2014.

The purpose of the plan was to grow the church in line with ideas outlined in Bishop James’ Vision and Strategy Document 2011.

VISION STATEMENT: Growing in love and service to God, reaching out in faith to the community in an open and friendly manner.

The priorities were formulated in a meeting of parishioners in November 2014 and working groups were formed to implement proposals 1 and 3.

Proposal 1. the Refurbishment and Re-ordering of the Church and Community Hall.
This will incorporate necessary structural repairs for which we intend to apply for Heritage Lottery Fund Places of Worship funding. Work to achieve this began in October 2014.

Proposal 2. to form a Worship Committee to consider ‘fresh expressions’ of worship.
A congregational survey highlighted a desire to develop alternative forms of worship and this is being explored by our newly formed Worship Committee.

Proposal 3. to encourage the greater involvement of young people at St John’s.
St John’s has a small, but successful Junior Church. The challenge is to retain our young people as they move into adolescence. To this end a small Youth Church, SJY?, has been set up.

Proposal 4. to create a Bereavement visitors’ group.
Churches Together offer training and we are exploring this option.

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

We have a rich and varied social life at St. John’s holding many events which cater for all ages and tastes. These include concerts, ceilidhs, steel band, quizzes, murder mystery nights, bingo, pie and pea suppers, and afternoon teas.

The Community Hall provides a relaxing atmosphere for evening events.

The Empty Reels ceilidh band and caller in action.
Steel Alive entertain at the Summer Fete in the church grounds.

The band rehearsing for Christmas 2014.

The parish outing to visit the Lindisfarne Gospels which were displayed in Durham Cathedral.

Pilgrims outside Durham Cathedral after a visit to see the Lindisfarne Gospels.
Amongst the groups that meet in the Community Hall are Women's Fellowship, **the Women's Group** and the Indoor Bowling Club.

The **COMMUNITY HALL** is a useful asset and is hired out on a weekly basis for Tai Chi classes, **Dramarama** who practise there and hire the hall to put on regular shows and Tiny Tots Play group. The hall and church are also used by Workington Town Council for meetings and workshops; by **The Carnegie Singers** for special concerts and by the general public for private functions.

*In December 2013, The Carnegie Singers held their 40th anniversary performance of The Messiah at St John’s, with several members of the church choir joining the group.*

In July 2014, the PCC made the decision to work towards achieving **Fairtrade accreditation**. Fairtrade products are used in the refreshments after services and functions and a stall displays Traidcraft products for sale at our regular Coffee Mornings and at our Charities’ Fair events.

*Where would St John’s be without our wonderful Tea Ladies?*
Afternoon tea before a Songs of Praise service.

LINKS

SCHOOLS

St John’s has recently established links with the local schools. Our Assistant Priest was invited to take part in assemblies at both Ashfield Infant and Junior Schools. A project is in the early stages of development with the Head of R.E. at Stainburn School to cement the educational contribution that parishioners and the church can make to their students’ development.

In June 2014, a class from Ashfield Junior School came to church to Experience Pentecost, which involved interesting, interactive displays to explain the significance of the festival. A similar event took place at Christmas and involved a much larger group of children drawn from the local Infant, Junior and Secondary schools. To complete the cycle of festivals, over 200 primary school children were involved in Experience Easter in March 2015.

In November 2014, Ashfield Infant School produced a large display on Judaism, part of which is shown here on display in the church.

In December all three schools held their Christmas Carol Services at St John’s. This was the first time that the secondary schools in Workington have held a service in the church for many years.
Workington has recently celebrated the twentieth anniversary of its twinning with Selm in North Germany. A group of musicians from the parish visited Selm in February 2014 and gave concerts with local musicians at the Gymnasium [Grammar School] and St Joseph’s Church. In September 2014, an assorted party of founding members and other dignitaries from Selm attended a celebratory service in St John’s.

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN WORKINGTON AND DISTRICT

St John’s is an active member of this group which organises shared worship and other events for the town and sharing in mission, such as the establishment of the North Lakes Foodbank Distribution Centre. St John’s is a collection centre for contributions to this project.
PERSON SPECIFICATION

An inspirational leader capable of shaping and helping us deliver our shared vision.

Relevant experience:
- Developing small groups to grow and share faith
- Facilitating team-working amongst the laity
- Leading or supporting the development of work with children, young people & families
- Experience of leading many different styles of worship

Desirable experience:
- Chaplaincy experience (industry, public services, education, business...)
- Leading or supporting a re-ordering project
- Experience of Ministry teams/ecumenical projects
- Experience of a town-centre church at some point in your life

Required skills and competencies
- Collaborative working: full engagement in the Mission Community (which is ecumenical), in the parish, and in the wider area
- Leadership and team skills including the ability to motivate, inspire, empower, and effectively coordinate volunteers
- Discernment and encouragement of gifts/vocations
- A recognition of inter-dependency – being supported as well as supporting
- The ability to make, recognise and respond to opportunities for mission
- An ability to make and build on links with individuals and community organisations beyond the church
- Ability to lead and manage change
- Respect for tradition and traditional worship while also introducing engaging, accessible, mature and thoughtful new styles of worship
- ICT literate
- Car driver
- Willingness to engage in further training that enhances skills

Personal attributes:
- A pastoral approach to ministry, prioritising empathy, active listening and reconciliation
- Flexibility and diplomacy
- Recognise your own shortcomings
- Sense of humour

Nice to have:
- An open approach to spirituality encouraging a variety of forms of prayer
- A love of all that is best in Anglo-Catholic worship
- Musician / singer
Appendix 1: MAP OF ST JOHN'S PARISH