



*St Peters Allerton*

## **Interim Priest-in-Charge**



## About the wider context

As part of the Interim Ministry Scheme – see Bishop’s Statement - St Peter’s has six specific objectives as part of revitalizing parish ministry and mission.

From January-May 2023 the congregation engaged in a series of Focused Discussion Groups to think through the options for their future. The summary here gives a sense of the journey we have been on, and hence where the focus for the immediate future is for the parish.

We looked at the **PAST**, and these are things that are central to the church that we want to take forward/regain: Love and friendship of our congregation; Community; Modern hymns; Friendship; Church family; Church as the centre of the community.

We looked at the **PRESENT**, recognizing that without help to resource mission and engage with the community, the congregation will struggle to survive & grow.

We looked at the **FUTURE** and thought through various things, including hearing from Revd Harry Gwinnett from St James Church Thornton about how he and some folks at St James have become involved in Allerton over the last few years. He shared a clear call from God to the Allerton Estate, which he has connections with through St James School, and there are a group of people at St James who sense God at work on the Allerton Estate and would like to explore what a worshipping community for local people there might look like.

By the end of the Focus Groups we came to a decision to focus on three things:

- 1) **ENGAGE WITH THE COMMUNITY** - Work with partners (Rooted In and Urban Saints) to build a presence in the community
- 2) **WORSHIP THAT MEETS PEOPLE** - Work with a group at St James Thornton who have sensed God’s call to the estate part of Allerton, to plant a new worshipping community at St Francis Hall.
- 3) **GROW AS DISCIPLES OURSELVES** – consider re-starting a homegroup

As a result we have begun to focus on ministry and mission at St Francis Hall. In February 2024 we moved our regular Sunday worship to St Francis Hall, we have started a weekly drop in space called ‘Tea, Toast and Talk’, and have plans for a community garden and summer events. Church members now volunteer at the Rooted In Youth Group for girls, which is a space intentionally open to faith conversations.

The PCC feel that the areas of Church life in particular need of development are:

- Links and outreach to the local community
- Pastoral care to existing congregation
- Develop all-age provision

These are the main areas of mission we would like you to prioritize in your ministry:

- Revive St Francis as a worship space
- Work in Allerton Parish schools
- Engage in mission in the parish e.g. with young people, with care homes, with schools

The top three challenges with which together we need to engage with:

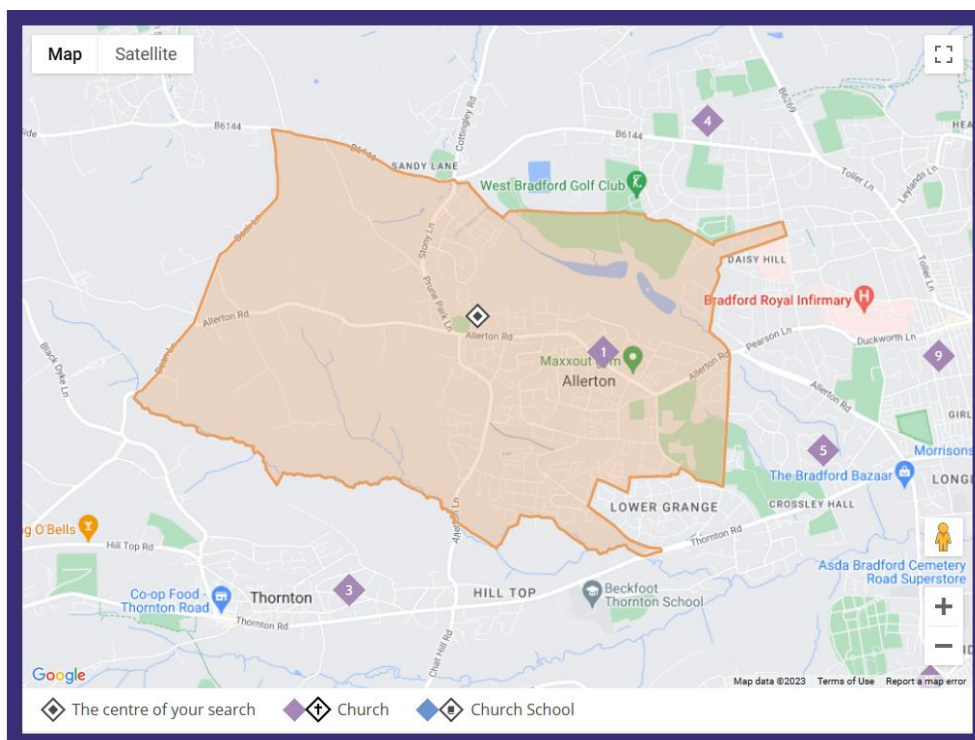
- 1) Engaging and growing existing congregation
- 2) Engaging the adult population in both St Peters and St Francis areas
- 3) Knowing the communities within the parish, as they have different characteristics and needs, determining how our Christian presence can meet those needs and building links through trust and action.

## About the parish

St Peters and St Francis Allerton is part of the Outer Deanery of Bradford Episcopal Area. St Peters Church on Allerton Road is our main centre for worship, whilst St Francis Hall on the Allerton Estate is used by community groups, charities and for church events.

Allerton as a village dates back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Although originally a village as the city of Bradford has developed it has become an outer suburb of the city. A significant amount housing was built in the decades following the Second World War as council housing – the Allerton Estate, which is a recognized area of significant deprivation. A new housing development on the western edge was built starting 2016, and new housing continues to be added to that side of Allerton.

Chellow Dene is a local beauty spot at the north of Allerton. It is a wooded valley with two Victorian reservoirs and is a haven for local wildlife.



The 2021 census results show that 18,520 people live in the Thornton and Allerton Ward.

Here are some key statistics:

- 23% of the population is under 16.
- 61% of the ward's population is aged between 16 and 64.
- 65% of the population identify as White and 38% identify as Christian, with 25% identifying as Muslim and 30% as non-religious.
- 45.7% of the households live in semidetached houses or bungalows, 26.5% of households live in terraced housing, 17.1% of households live in detached houses or bungalows and 8.6% live in flats.
- 63.9% of Thornton and Allerton households live in owner-occupied housing.
- Café West Community Centre offer a variety of community services.

The Thornton and Allerton Ward is ranked 18th out of 30 wards where 1 is the most deprived and 30 is the least deprived. Thornton and Allerton is in 16th place for both income and employment deprivation and 19th place for education, skills and training deprivation. It is classed as an area of high deprivation, with a high percentage of children on free school meals.

### Some of the best things about Allerton:

- Chellow Dean is a great place to walk
- A number of primary and secondary schools either in the parish or nearby
- Good bus routes into Bradford
- Easy to get to nice countryside



## About the Church

### *The Church and its people*

St Peters has a regular worshipping congregation of 11, with a wider fringe of 13 and a number of housebound members. In the last few months we have had a number of newer people join the church, some regularly and some occasionally, which has been a real joy and encouragement!

The congregation is 80% retired, with a 60-40% female-male ratio. Majority ethnically white British, with around 10% other ethnicities. 65% of the congregation live in the parish. We don't regularly have any children or young people as part of the church but have a children's corner and activity bags for visiting children.

We have taken part in joint events/courses across the 4 parishes including:

- A Lent course, an Alpha Course, prayer events for Thy Kingdom Come, praise and prayer evening.
- Opportunity to attend Diocesan lay leadership course called "Personal Growth and Leadership Course)

We worship at 10.30am on Sundays, with one Service of the Word per month and the rest Holy Communion Services, though we are flexible as needed. The tradition is central, cassock alb and stole preferred for services, with Mission Praise Hymn books and CDs for worship.



There is currently a very committed PCC of 5, who take much responsibility for the church and work well with the clergy and congregation. It includes two churchwardens, a PCC Secretary and a treasurer. Both churchwardens have committed to staying in role until the APCM in 2024. Our treasurer took the role on at the beginning of 2023 on a temporary basis for a year to help out. The PCC is very engaged with questions around the future of the church and parish, with a deep commitment to St Peters and desiring to see the church grow and flourish.

We have an administrator working 8 hours per week, shared with St Saviours and St James (also 8 hours per week each). A reader from St James Thornton worships and takes a monthly service of the word.

**At St Peters you will find a church family. People really care for one another and the parish, and if you join us you'll find a bunch of people willing to love you.**

### *The Church and the community*

Historically St Peters has been active in the community of Allerton, with various events and groups happening, including quiz nights, social events, flowers festivals, youth groups at St Francis Hall, worship at St Francis Hall. Gradually these all stopped, and now the church is not active in the community under its own steam.

Our recent engagement with the community was in running a weekly Place of Welcome/Warm Space, in Autumn 2022-Spring 2023. It was poorly attended as our community presence is minimal, and we stopped it when the Warm Space

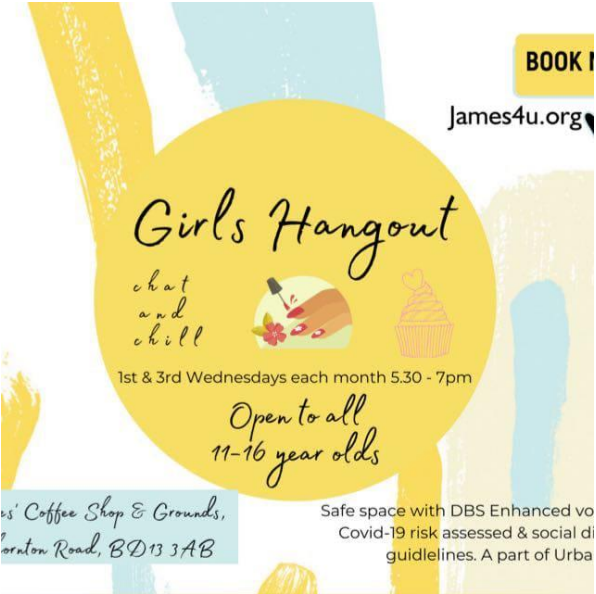
funding ended due to limited capacity of the volunteers.

We partner with two charities:

**Rooted In** is a local charity working with children, young people and families in Allerton since 2003. They use St Francis Hall as a venue for their regular groups, and have a long-term lease of the old St Peters Vicarage to develop into their own space for groups and office. Current conversations are around partnership working. The **“Growing Faith” Hub** initiative, of which Rooted In, St Peters, St James and Urban Saints are partners in, is about building stronger connections between the church, the local CofE School (St James) and the home. We were recently awarded £10,000 per year for two years, to develop as a hub and are exploring what this might mean. The first initiative planned is a weekly Messy Church style after-school space for children and parents at St James School – on the border of Allerton and Thorton.



**Urban Saints** runs a weekly Girls Hangout Group at St Francis Hall, with volunteers from St James and St Peters. It has a loose faith focus, and this was their latest project, based around the Fruit of the Spirit.



Other things to note:

- We hire both our church halls out to community groups and businesses.
- We infrequently have weddings, funerals and baptism.
- There are a number of schools in the parish, both primary and secondary. There is no regular contact with any of these schools except St James School in Allerton.
- The churches in Allerton take it in turns to lead the Civic Act of Remembrance at the Cenotaph in Ladyhill Park – Allerton Methodist Church, Allerton Congregational Church.

## *The Church and its buildings*

We have three buildings in regular use: St Peters Church for worship on Sundays, St Peters Church Hall for hall hire, St Francis Village Hall for charity groups and hire.

General state of all buildings is good, with some repairs, cleaning and decoration needed. We are working on a grant application to update St Francis Hall to better fit its purpose, to include a new kitchen, soundproofing, new doors, chairs and an AV system.





## *The Church and its finances*

Finances have been challenging over the last 4 years, with considerable effort expended to gain access to accounts and make changes where possible. Our income is significantly below expenditure, with parish share not being met and limited reserves.

We have been working to increase hall hire and hire rates, reduce energy costs, and make other changes, and that has had positive results so far in 2023. We pay reasonable clergy expenses in full.

## **What kind of priest are we looking for?**

These are our top three qualities we feel are essential for the ministry in Allerton.

- 1) Open minded and embraces diversity
- 2) Team-player
- 3) Evangelist

These are qualities we think are important:

- A sense of humour
- Down-to-earth
- Able to work with both ends of the age spectrum
- Able to reach out to the wider community via organizations and schools
- Able and willing to work with other local churches for the benefit of all of Allerton

## **What can you expect of us?**

The PCC and congregation are committed and caring. We will do our best to support you and work with you in our shared ministry. We expect you to take proper holidays and days off, and we will support you in time taken for ongoing training, reading and personal development.



WE INVITE YOU TO

# Carols by Candlelight

WED 14TH DEC 5-6.30PM

FESTIVE HOT SANDWICHES SERVED 5-5.30PM  
HOT CHOC, MULLED WINE, FIRE PITS

AT THE OLD VICARAGE GARDEN  
LEY TOP LANE. BD15 7LT

£1 PER PERSON INCLUDES FOOD & DRINK  
TICKETED EVENT  
PLEASE RSVP TO ROOTED IN 07795 435386



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