

Parish Profile

Welcome to the Parish of Kidderminster East. Thank you for your interest in the Team Vicar role. Please read on to understand who we are and whom we seek ...



The Parish of Kidderminster East



Encountering God, following Jesus, Spirit-transforming lives



Incorporating the churches of:

St Cecilia

St Chad

St George

*St Mary, Stone
and currently,*

St Cassian

<https://kidderminstereast.org.uk>

Welcome



David Hildred, Team Rector

“We began looking for a colleague a while ago, but we still remain convinced that the Lord will send us the right person at the right time: we continue to pray in that direction. The bulk of this profile remains the same as before, but we have updated it to reflect our changing situation.

We have now begun to work as a parish of four churches, and St Cassian’s, who were formerly part of Kidderminster East, is now working with a new rural grouping of churches. We remain legally connected for the moment, but ministry is conducted there by their new team. Our focus is now more urban; does that fit with your skills, experience and ministry shape?

I joined the parish in June 2020, just as the first of the Covid-19 lockdowns was being lifted, but church life remained disrupted for quite some time. We hope you will have something much nearer to a 'normal' starting experience!

The basis of our ministry here is a love for Jesus that is fed by the Bible and fuelled by the Spirit. This gives plenty of space for diversity of opinion, whilst also giving us a focus for our ministry and mission as a unified parish of four churches. That diversity within our unity was expressed amongst those who took part in the LLF process. My personal approach to matters of human sexuality is to uphold the historic teaching of the Anglican church, whilst offering a warm welcome to all people with love and respect to worship with us, whatever their situation, needs or means and be part of the church family.

We want to be fruitful for the Lord according to his agenda. Would you consider joining us?”

David

With the benefit of God’s direction and the information in this profile, we hope that you will want to meet us to explore further our mission; serving God, sharing his Word and serving our community to the very best of our ability.

We like to work collaboratively, and wholeheartedly support diversity, since we believe everyone needs to be included in the opportunity of hearing and responding to the Good News of Jesus. Because we accept that no one has a monopoly on good ideas, we would love to hear yours.

Should an informal discussion be helpful for you to consider us further, we strongly encourage you to have a conversation with David, our Team Rector.

Please contact David Hildred on 01562 743895, or 07906 156239, or via email, d.hildred@kidderminstereast.org.uk

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Vacancy Prayer

We're praying; will you pray this with us before reading on?

Heavenly Father, we thank and praise you for your love for all people, and for all you give us.

During our vacancy, we pray particularly for the person we believe in faith you have chosen to be our next Team Vicar.

May that person respond gladly to your call, and work with us to grow your Kingdom here.

While we wait, send us your Holy Spirit: help us to be patient, build us up in faith and love, and equip us to serve you well with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

These things we ask in the name of Jesus. Amen

Whom we seek

With four churches in the parish we anticipate the Team Rector and Team Vicar each being pastorally and administratively responsible for two churches, but we're not looking to create two groups within the one parish, rather for the two clergy to work collaboratively and supportively with each other and the many lay leaders within the churches, and across the parish. We want the benefit of the four within the one.

There are a number of parish-wide initiatives for which the Team Vicar could be responsible, and whilst it is open to negotiation (according to what the Team Vicar brings to the parish) we initially are looking for someone who has a heart for:

- (a) discipleship – developing what we do with Alpha, Christianity Explored, our home groups
- (b) evangelism – especially since we are anticipating a large residential development within the parish
- (c) ministry to families and children – with opportunities for extending our contact with schools

It is our current plan that the Team Vicar will take responsibility for St Chad's and St Mary's, with the Team Rector being responsible for St Cecilia's and St George's. The timings of the main services on a Sunday morning will need to be re-thought, and it might be that you have a suggestion to bring to the table.

The timings of the main services on a Sunday morning have now been re-worked so that there are two earlier services followed by two at 11:00am which means that the two stipendiary clergy are able to attend all services.

Vision and Values

During Lent 2022 we worked across the parish and formulated this Vision Statement:

We are seeking to build the Kingdom of God, showing the qualities of Jesus within us to the world around us

This was further explained by our Purpose Paragraph:

We are united by God's love, without requiring uniformity; each church 'dreaming its own dreams' about building the Kingdom, whilst being humbly alert to the dreams of others. Our life together is shaped by God's grace shown to us individually, as we grow in being the disciples of Jesus. We seek to be faithful to God's word, and to be fruitful by being fuelled by his Spirit. We are people with good news about Jesus who want to live and share that good news.

And to accompany our multi-coloured cross logo we concluded that our parish is about:

Encountering God, following Jesus, Spirit-transforming lives

Please read on if you sense you could fit here.

Team Vicar

Role description

Under God, we are hoping that Bishop John will appoint a new colleague who, working in close partnership with the Team Rector, is ready to offer oversight and leadership in our Parish.

He or she will be an Anglican Priest ready for this post of incumbent status.

We expect that the ministry of 'Leadership and Oversight' will involve:

- Taking pastoral and administrative responsibility for two of our four churches, St Chad's and St Mary's, whilst maintaining the unity of the four. Our new Team Vicar will principally minister in these two churches, and occasionally in 'the others'
- Preaching the Bible
- Encouraging, training and developing existing lay leaders, and seeking out potential new leaders
- Growing our congregations in number, in the use of their gifts and in their walk with Jesus
- Strengthening and developing our worship, both formal and informal

- Leading a particular portfolio of ministry across the whole parish, with the Team Rector having a complementary portfolio. This would be open to negotiation as part of the discernment process, but initially we believe it would helpfully include:
 - discipleship, especially encouraging the development of Alpha, Christianity Explored and our home groups
 - evangelism to new-build estates that are anticipated in the near future (1400 homes)
 - families' ministry, as we seek to extend what we currently offer
- Sharing in the parish-wide ministry of the occasional offices, especially in funerals alongside some of our team of Readers (known in this diocese as Licensed Lay Ministers, LLMs)
- Sharing in ministry to schools and nursing homes across the parish, alongside particular teams of lay people
- Meeting regularly with the Team Rector to pray
- Sharing with the Team Rector in implementing vision, developing strategies, proposing innovation, reviewing and monitoring the life of the parish
- Attending PCC and Standing Committee, and the particular two churches' DCCs

Person specification

- A personal devotion to Jesus that is reflected in a life shaped by prayer, service and Bible study
- Able to fulfil the charge to "Do the work of an evangelist", even if not an evangelist by gifting

- Willing to play a key part in (and ideally with some proven experience of) managing change and transition, with a vision for building the Kingdom
- Able to lead, inspire and encourage others in the use of their God-given gifts, with an expectation of growth of people of all ages
- Able to relate well to others, to know self, and have both a thick and thin skin
- An eagerness to work collaboratively with both lay and ordained leaders, whilst also being self-motivated and organised
- Open to the creativity of unexpected disruption, unafraid to use humour appropriately, able to maximize moments of dignity
- Able to connect with children and young people, and explore the life of faith with them
- Have a confidence in the use of technology and a willingness to be trained in programmes or systems that are unfamiliar
- Be committed to our vision and values as expressed elsewhere in this profile, and be able to embrace where we believe God is leading us
- Have a passion for seeing lives transformed and presenting Jesus to the society in which we live

1 Cor 12:12 "The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts..."

Accommodation

The Vicarage set aside for the Team Vicar is at 186 Birmingham Road. This has recently been the residence of a Curate, and before that a Team Rector, from neighbouring parishes. The Diocese are undertaking a schedule of works to the property which includes replacement of all double-glazing, installation of upgraded insulation above the garage and study, full internal and external decoration, along with minor repairs as identified by the quinquennial inspection undertaken in December 2023. Alongside this a quote for solar panels has been sought. If it would be helpful, please feel free to phone David, our Team Rector, to enquire about the very latest position.



A walk in Hurcott woods

Worship leadership & governance



Across the parish, greatly enabled and encouraged by the clergy, there are many ministry enabling and supporting services, roles, councils, and initiatives.

In terms of governance and administration, these include a staffed parish office (40 hours per week), the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and District Church Councils (DCC) and congregation members who are involved in a vast array of working groups, ministry teams and serving opportunities.

Financial governance is undertaken at individual church level and reviewed by PCC. Accounts were last independently examined in the spring of 2023. The full accounts, AGM reports and individual accounts for each church are available by request from the Treasurer at office@kidderminstereast.org.uk.

We have paid our Ministry Share in full for 2023, and intend the same for 2024. Clergy expenses are paid in full. We preach annually about giving and pray for the Spirit to be at work amongst us in releasing God's generosity through us.

Safety, safeguarding and training are essential pre-cursors to all activities, especially outreach. Our Parish Safeguarding Officer advises and manages all facets of organisation and safeguarding administration. Maintenance teams from across the parish share their skills.

Lay leadership is expressed in a number of ways. There are those who have undergone training and are Licensed Lay Ministers or Authorised Lay Ministers (ALMs have more closely defined pastoral, worship-leading or administration roles). We have seven LLMs (plus one in training), and two ALMs. Three of the LLMs are authorised to take funerals. We are blessed regularly by the ministry of three retired clergy.

Charities, parish-wide outreach and initiatives


Through connections with individual churches, a number of charities are supported. The logos of some of those organisations, local, national and international, are displayed below. Church members will be happy to discuss these further.



There are a number of well-supported home groups in the parish. In addition to Bible study, the groups offer pastoral and practical care.

Since April, 2022, primarily within school holiday periods, we have been staging **Children's Club** events at St Chad's. These are well supported and a number of children who attend these events are now regularly attending Children's Church. The inspiration for the club was a reaction to the low number of children attending church.

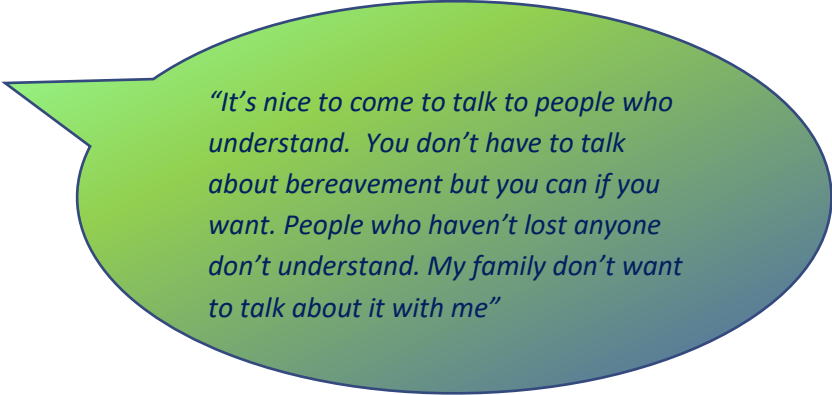
The event schedule includes bible stories, delivered in a variety of ways, craft, and high-octane activities such as team games, singing and dancing and, to feed the body in addition to the soul, healthy refreshments and a cooked meal. All is provided free of charge. Fund-raising and continued sponsorship by local charities sustains this work. We aspire to reach more children and families by increasing the frequency and scope of children's events. Any experience and guidance that would help us develop this and other children's ministry programmes further is most welcome.



"I love the Bible stories and food at Children's Club!"

Life after Loss, Kidderminster East's bereavement café, which started in August 2021, is held monthly in the homely surroundings of St Cecilia's. The café is open to anyone who is bereaved, whether recent or longstanding. Members of the Bereavement

Ministry Team, including trained volunteers, provide free tea, coffee and homemade cakes in a safe place for people to meet others in a similar situation. We also offer art and craft activities and a prayer table in a quiet area. The organisers work with external agencies, such as the North Worcestershire Bereavement Service, which offers free counselling, and the Wyre Forest Social Prescribing Service which can refer people to the group. Leaflets advertising the service have been provided to local funeral directors and distributed to all local churches.



"It's nice to come to talk to people who understand. You don't have to talk about bereavement but you can if you want. People who haven't lost anyone don't understand. My family don't want to talk about it with me"

Once a month we hold the **Family Fun Activity Afternoons** on a Sunday afternoon. This outreach initiative began at and is hosted by St Cecilia's. This fun and inclusive event brings in families from outside the church.

Kidderminster East Youth Group (KEY) is for children and young adults aged 9 and above. KEY meets on the first Sunday of every month after the Family Fun Activity Afternoons held at St Cecilia's. Sessions vary in length. During short sessions, we have a short bible discussion and a general chat about our week and our hobbies/interests, encouraging social interaction. At the longer sessions, we also have a Bible discussion and enjoy fun games, activities and quizzes. We also have social sessions when we might enjoy pizza nights, bowling trips, arts

and crafts etc. The young people thoroughly enjoyed the 2022 Christmas party with Peter Cooper providing the entertainment by performing his magic show. A fun festive evening was had by all.

During the last year we have been looking at the various parables and have recently started the youth Alpha programme which we have used successfully before.

Men's Breakfast is prepared...



In 2022, two members of the St Cecilia's congregation started a monthly **Men's Breakfast**. This has now become a parish-wide event. Not to be outdone, the ladies decided to follow suit and meet in a café in the town centre. Both these events have grown, and it is lovely to meet and chat with others from other churches. The ladies also enjoyed a home-catered afternoon tea together recently, as well as on another occasion a cooked breakfast.



...and eaten!

1 Pet 2:17 "Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honour the emperor"

Over 20 years ago, a member of the congregation felt a calling to do something for older people and **Young at Heart** was born. From small beginnings this group is still going strong and regularly has on average, 25 people attending. Many of the participants are non-churchgoers and from other churches. This has been, and continues to

Covid brought us together ...

Yes really! Thanks to Zoom, our services continued online in a very innovative way and we were able to participate fully in every aspect. These services were generally well received and we had a few non-churchgoers join us as well as those who found going to church difficult because of health issues. As well as the Sunday service we also had a contemplative prayer service midweek and a Friday quiz. We really got to know people from other churches (and their families) at this time.

To quote one church member “the congregation developed a sense of community during this time.”
“... Loneliness addressed, quiz, joining in worship, all in one congregation, willingness to work together on parish-wide projects instead of individually. It brought us together in a remarkable way.”

be, a very successful venture. The group is for anyone around the age of 50 and above, living in the local area and enjoys a varied programme of mainly social events including, but not limited to: games, travel talks, sitting Zumba, estate planning, outings to heritage places, visiting the local Arboretum and health workshops. It’s a lively group, with a variety of members, and the meetings are sure to have you laughing!



The desire to meet together as a parish is expressed well by over 70 people who have signed up to attend the parish Lent Course in 2024 taking place in St Cecilia’s church. We are studying the Letter to the Romans using the material from the Bible Society, “The Romans Course”. There is a good mixture of people from each of our churches, both those who have been members of the congregation for a long time and those who have joined us in recent times.

We are seeking ways of engaging with the diocesan strategy of growing younger and developing new worshipping communities. We are excited by this new vision.

Weekday Morning Prayer, the monthly Parish Prayer meeting and all manner of other group meetings are conducted via Zoom. One of the major benefits of online services is that those who are housebound can remain connected.



Parishioners enjoy social activities. In 2022, there was a well-attended parish barn dance at St George's. Our churches are also used for celebrations such as the Jubilee and Golden Wedding parties. Fellowship activities are greatly encouraged. Supporting enjoyment of the outdoors, trips such as the Parish canal trip are organised.



As one might expect in an active parish, on any day, there are those meeting to support ministry, extended fellowship activities and the provision of practical support.

Across the parish, there's a willingness to worship together, to discuss and plan outreach initiatives, to socialise and to be actively involved in all the ways necessary to build a healthy, active congregation that aspires to growing the Kingdom.

We are prayerful about our work, but it needs further development and direction. You may have experience and ideas.

Services

Each church has a communion service twice a month and also enjoys a variety of other Services of the Word.

Parishioners benefit from the information shared in bi-weekly parish newsletters circulated via email and in hardcopy for those who need this format. All service information is published in the parish calendar on the website.

Vision and Reality

We are wholly committed to supporting the Diocesan Strategy for 2023-2030, which is to:



- (a) double the number of children and young people worshipping in our churches
- (b) create a new worshipping community (e.g. Forest Church, Café Church) in each benefice
- (c) to grow at least one church in each population area to an Average Weekly Attendance of 150

We are excited by this strategy; could you help us make it a reality?

Here is an indication of what numbers looked like in 2023.

KEP Statistics 2023	St Cecilia	St Chad	St George	St Mary, Stone	TOTAL
Usual Sunday Attendance (2023 Statistics for Mission) shown as Adults & Children	28 & 0	58 & 6	72 & 9	14 & 0	172 & 15
Christenings (Baptisms and Thanksgivings)	1	0	7	4	12
Weddings and Wedding Blessings	0	0	1	2	3
Funerals & Burial of Ashes	0 & 0	0 & 0	16 & 17	3 & 1	19 & 18
Funerals at Crematorium only	29				

Learn more about us in the individual church commentaries below as key voices describe themselves.

St Cecilia's

We are a friendly, welcoming, forward-looking church, keen to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit. Although we are small in number, we want to reach out to those not presently part of our church family and feel that we are well equipped to do that with the right leadership. At the moment we only have children in church occasionally, but we want to be relevant and welcoming to children, youth and young families whilst continuing to serve the older generations. We need someone with a passion to help us show Christ to the society we are living in.



"We're like a family, not perfect but always there for one another"

We are always keen to explore new ways of worship. Most of our services are informal and we have fairly recently introduced café church to our regular pattern of worship. We are open to change and development if, by doing so, we are following God's will.

Whilst we are very blessed in our musicians, we also use some music downloaded from the Internet and all our services are on screen rather than using a booklet.

We have held community events such as showing the Coronation through our recently updated technology. We also started a Warm Space breakfast through the winter, but this didn't attract many people. It may be something which we can develop over time in order to reach our community more effectively.



Our modern church building has many facilities and is often rented out to groups during the week as well as being used for parish events such as the Bereavement Café, KEY (Kidderminster East Youth), Young at Heart, Family Fun Activity Afternoons and Alpha.



Although last winter saw our financial reserves severely depleted due to a burst pipe and all our gas heaters being condemned and repaired, we are still financially viable and have been able to meet all financial commitments so far.

"In church there is friendship, laughter, togetherness and with a common aim of worship"

St Chad's



Incorporating the homes of the more affluent, St Chad's is central to an area where child poverty and widespread challenging social deprivation is unmistakable. In the main, our modern, well-maintained church and hall caters for a congregation that is much less financially and socially challenged than the local community, a juxtaposition that renders the congregation both mixed and interesting. Irrespective, ministering to all in need is a key outreach objective. We seek to add spiritual and practical value wherever we can.

Broadly speaking, those joining worship on Sundays will see a comfortably filled church. Ours is an animated, welcoming and friendly congregation. Hugging, chatting, sharing life and faith-affirming exchanges is the order of the day. We are most definitely loving and caring and it is in this trusted environment that we thrive. Prayerful and practical support is always available at St Chad's. All of these expressions of faith in worship and action are a testament to a church family that seeks to invite others to join the Kingdom.

Visitors may spot the 'sea of grey heads' in church. Yes, in the main, the congregation is made up of over 55's, but an impulsive assessment of what that might imply may be deceptive. We are full of life and energy; our outlook is for growth rather than inertia and this is abundantly evidenced by the range of outreach initiatives, community welcoming services and facilities on offer. Most of these activities are organised and staffed by those collecting their state pension; nevertheless, across the board, skill and expertise is employed for God's work but, we know we must do more.

"I value the friendship, sense of fun and acceptance that has always made St Chad's special"

It would be easy to tread the path most travelled and continue to make steady progress doing what we already do, but if we say that our church is evangelistic then we need to do 'what it says on the tin'; we must reach out to the community and not just run events that we expect others to attend on the premises.

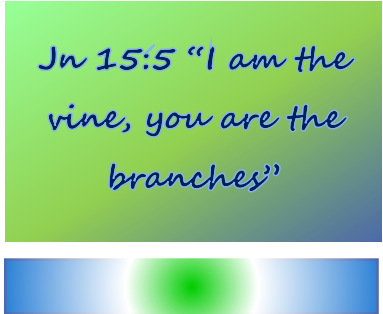
One practical way to address 'reaching out' is to harvest and use our gifts beyond the church building. If everyone's gifts were known, be it building to business management, dog walking to digging, talents could be employed for even greater service to both church and local communities. Connections may grow as a result. To support this initiative, DCC are discussing the creation of a skills database that we expect to populate parish-wide and then employ by advertising assistance to those who may need it. Friendship and service feeds conversation.

If our aim is to become a multi-generational church community, and for most of us it is, addressing the disparity in the congregation age profile must also be a priority. There are younger people in church but too few to create a healthy mix and pipeline. Societal priorities and changes in religious education may have contributed to the decline in younger generations in attendance, but with a heart for growth and inclusion (and in addition to our traditional services), our ambition must be to introduce relevant, contemporary programmes to attract millennials and beyond. How can we introduce Jesus to younger generations? There are so many ways; youth groups, sports events and teams (five-a-side?), a pop choir and drama, all of which can be linked to scripture, are but a few. These activities involve all of the family. Perhaps even a Christian rock festival? "Let's rock Comberton!" Just a thought ...

Can you help us with our challenges?

Hopefully, you will find the following current and aspirational activities encouraging.

- *The Open the Book team regularly attends one local school. Recent engagement with the children and their response is very encouraging. Supporting the team and taking the Word into more schools must be the way forward given that children receive so little Christian education at school*
- *Children's Church, at the centre of our unfaltering children's ministry, continues under the leadership of dedicated volunteers of differing ages; it's a bonus that we have some younger leaders on board - but we need more children!*



In 15:5 "I am the vine, you are the branches"

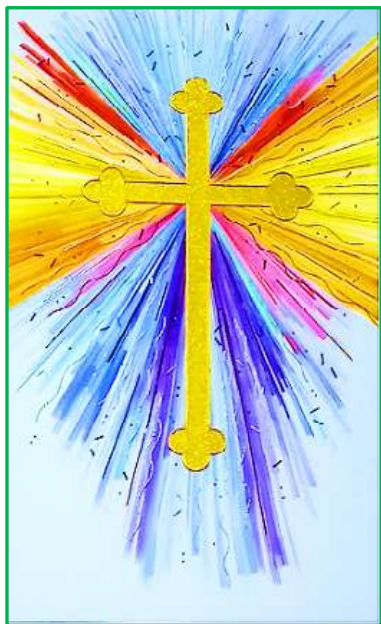
- *The Barrel of Fun is the outlet of the King of Hearts charity, the vision of a longstanding parishioner. See [The King of Hearts](#) website for more details. Delivery of Christian assemblies in schools is a key accomplishment*
- *A disability audit has recently been conducted to identify, within means, what we can do to enable access and enjoyment of services for all. Buildings, facilities, presentation systems, hearing loops and learning or physical disability challenges have all been considered*
- *[Café Chad](#), in its 11th year, is a community centred café operated by church volunteers. The team extends a welcome to all two mornings each week and hosts regular events. All profits are distributed to various charities. Many locals rely on the café for social engagement and support (volunteers even assist with computer challenges, bus pass and passport applications). Prayer and practical support in varying forms is always available. The Art Group is so popular that it is now hosted on both mornings!*
- *Re-instatement of the Carer & Toddler Group is under discussion*
- *Worship4All is our monthly LLM led service with less liturgy and more free expression in the delivery of scripture based themes. We love to include children in conveying the message*
- *We are blessed by the musical talents of our enthusiastic Worship Group and hope to create a youth music group too*
- *A number of groups, Brownies, slimmers, line dancers and others, ensure that the hall is in regular use*



“We are people who need to be on the march to find new ways of being the Lord’s missionaries and disciples in a world that is turning at a bewilderingly fast pace”

With an influx of new homes in the area, we have a golden opportunity to extend ministry to even more families but to do that, and to achieve all of our other aims effectively, we need the direction of an enthusiastic, nurturing and team-building spirited leader. A God-filled, mission-led way forward is essential.

Could this leader be you?



St George's

St George's would probably be described as having a traditional style of worship. We have a long established choir, averaging about twelve members, under the leadership of an organist and a musical director. That being said most of us are not averse to more modern, less formal services. We cannot hide the fact that the average age of our adult congregation is probably close to seventy but we are, on the whole, a very active and enthusiastic group.

As well as our Sunday and Wednesday church services we have an actively thriving home group.

We have a Sunday morning children's group attracting about six or seven children which, again, we are keen to expand. Our toddler and carer group meets weekly in the church annexe. We have links with five local schools who visit for end of term and, particularly, Christmas services. Our Open the Book team visit St George's Primary School monthly. Each half-term holiday we run a children's activity event based around a Bible story. This attracts upwards of fifty children, most of whom do not attend church. Like many churches we are looking to increase the number of children and younger adults coming to St George's.

"Focused on Jesus: I always find Him in the service"

the first Wednesday of each month we hold a pop up café which provides a hot meal in the winter and a ploughman's type meal in the summer, free of charge to those in need who are unable to pay. This is funded by donations from those who can afford to pay.

We run a weekly Friday coffee shop which is well attended by church and non-church people. A community art group meets at the same time. On



We have a weekly knit and natter group including many non-church members and we have regular coach day trips, again with many non-church members attending. A group of our men often undertake day trips by train and our ladies sometimes “lunch”.

St George's is a "Trusted Organisation" for Big Local DY10, which means that our account holds the money for grants which are allocated by their Committee for the benefit of deprived areas within the DY10 postcode area. The treasurer of St George's is a member of the Committee.

We have close links with [H.E.L.P](#) a local charity for the homeless.

St George's church is a large Grade II* listed building. Its interior is, in contrast to its exterior, light and airy. The church was re-ordered a few years ago and the pews were removed and replaced with comfortable, moveable chairs and choir stalls. At the same time new heating, lighting and audio-visual systems were installed making it an ideal space for concerts, parties, craft fairs and our half term children's events. The church has been used as a wedding reception venue and for post funeral receptions. Kidderminster Town Hall is at present closed for redevelopment and St George's is hosting a lot of the events formerly held there. We hope to retain some of these events after the Town Hall re-opens in two years.

“St George's is very warm and friendly. I have felt very welcome”



In addition to the church building we have a church hall, known as “the annexe” which is well used by local community groups as well as the church.

Our buildings and extensive churchyard are largely maintained by our volunteer maintenance team which meets most Monday mornings. The team won the National Churches Trust award for maintenance in England and also the Nayler Award for Excellence in Church Maintenance for the UK in 2022.

Mt 22:37-39 “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind ... Love your neighbour as yourself”

St Mary the Virgin, Stone

St Mary's, known locally as "the pretty church on the hill", is in the hamlet of Stone. There has been a place of worship on the site since 1269, although the present Grade II listed traditional country church with a capacity of 120 worshippers was completed in 1830 following a fire that destroyed the original building.

Our congregation offer a warm, friendly welcome to all and follow the more traditional liturgy with our regular worshippers providing readers, prayers and ministry support. We are pleased to be able to worship with other Kidderminster East churches and to use alternative and modern services, happily supporting the wider parish at united services. At St Mary's our music, hymns and traditions are enhanced by a pipe organ and the church bells are rung before some of our services. Whilst currently we do not initiate home groups or prayer ministry ourselves, we actively support our fellow churches in their groups and activities.



The old preaching cross

*"Love to be welcomed by the bells ringing
before a service as I walk up the path"*

Although our worshipping numbers are presently small, there are exciting future growth opportunities as there are a series of planned housing developments near St Mary's and we are eager with our other Kidderminster East churches, to welcome the new families and residents to join us to praise and worship God in our beautiful church. St Mary's is a popular choice for weddings and baptisms, and we have developed a welcoming video showing the interior of the church and its many features, which can be found on the Kidderminster East website; this is further supported by a variety of publications detailing our long history.

Php 2:3-4 "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others"



As a worshipping community we are working hard to sustain and develop God's love in the area and have organised a regular afternoon "tea and cake" event called Stone Corner Café to help and encourage the parishioners of Stone to meet in a relaxed and friendly surrounding and this is now an important occasion for many residents.

"Love the feeling of peace and the calm quiet atmosphere of the church"

We can summarise our mission and vision in a very simple way by quoting a verse that is on display in our church.

*"In this old church
New hope is given
For peace on earth
And joy in heaven"*

St Cassian's



St Cassian's is the church that has left us to join with other village churches to form a new rural benefice in the deanery. The church family there has been part of Kidderminster East for 11 years and has had a strong ministry of engagement with its part of the parish, offered many innovations through the Worship4All service, whilst also offering a Book of Common Prayer Evensong. Although we will feel diminished by their departure we trust that these two new parishes will both grow with the particular focus each one has.

Kidderminster - the local area, services and facilities



Having read this far, we really hope you're seriously thinking about joining us. If so, you'll need to know all about Kidderminster. As you would expect from a town, we are well supplied with schools, doctors, dentists, care homes, shops etc. Kidderminster hospital has a minor injury unit open 7 days a week but not 24 hours. Nearby are Worcester, Redditch, and Birmingham hospitals.

Kidderminster was well known at one time for its carpet manufacturing but, sadly, this has been in decline for many years. Due to this, the town is quite run down in many places, but has been given a £17.9 million grant from the government under their Levelling Up scheme. There are, though, still many positives to the town. Our chief tourist attractions are the Severn Valley Railway and the Safari Park. If walking is your thing there are numerous beauty spots where you can walk along the River Severn, the canals, the woods and open countryside as well as visit National Trust houses and other heritage houses/places. Kidderminster is in the Wyre Forest district.

The forest visitor centre and access to the many walks is just a few miles outside of the town and if you have an interest in picturesque Georgian towns, Bewdley and the River Severn is adjacent to the north-western boundary of Kidderminster.

Of course, all your time won't be spent in Kidderminster. If you wish to escape from time to time, the transport system is excellent, both rail and road.

The M5/M6 network is approximately 20 minutes away and there is easy access to other motorways.



Rowland Hill



Richard Baxter

Parish Map



Invitation to apply

At our APCM in 2023 we had a think about this formula:

holy grit x Holy Spirit = holy fruit

We believe there are times when God puts grit in our shoes to make us aware of how and where we are walking, as a holy irritation, rather than it being just human grumbling and complaining. If we can take that grit and work with the Holy Spirit in the way that he wants to move us, again rather than it just being our human ideas, then we believe we will produce holy fruit: fruit that will last, fruit that will bless. Is there anything in all of that which might inspire you to come and join us?

Will you walk with us further?

We will be delighted to hear from you. Please do contact us for an informal chat or, if you can, come and see us.

Perhaps a visit would encourage you to find us a very compelling prospect?

Applications can be made via the diocesan website on the application form, noting the deadline of 23rd April, 2024.

Gal 5:22 "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control"

The Diocese of Worcester

The Diocese of Worcester covers an area of 671 square miles and includes parishes in Worcestershire, the Metropolitan Borough 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, and we recently reduced the number of deaneries from thirteen to six.

Growing as Kingdom People

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.

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*



Supporting our vision

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.

Characterised by:

Love
Compassion
Justice
Freedom

Putting God first – relying on, and trusting in God, seeking to be Christ centred and Jesus shaped, and being led by the Spirit

"Speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is Christ".

Ephesians 4:15 (NIV)

Growing in Health and Sustainability

The change framework

AIM

Prayerfully enabling church communities across the Diocese to grow in health and sustainability

Inspiring

Church communities generating creative local responses

- Releasing parishes and deaneries to deliver appropriately local responses that enable them to flourish and to grow ministry and mission.
- Maintaining diocesan-wide engagement that listens, inspires, mobilises, and keeps informed.

Equipping

Purposeful equipping, supporting and resourcing

- Support and training for church communities, that
 - builds capability and capacity to deliver local health and sustainability
 - establishes new worshipping communities
 - enables collaborative working
 - develops discipleship, and both pastoral and missional living.
- Growing resourcing churches to help equip, develop or revitalise other churches.
- Planting congregations and churches into new or unreached communities.
- Growing disciples - particularly children, young people and families.
- Supporting smaller churches, to establish appropriate ways of worshipping, and of being a sustainable local Christian presence.

Leadership

Clergy and lay people working and leading together

- Developing additional patterns of ordained, voluntary, and lay ministry.
- Building capability and skills in collaborative working.
- Establishing networks to share learning on innovative approaches to growing in health and sustainability.

Stewardship

Wise and generous stewardship

- Rolling out a revised parish share scheme that is fair and linked to local cost of ministry.
- Fostering prayerful and generous giving.
- Focusing diocesan resources on the areas of greatest need and opportunity.

Following wide consultation about the future of our church, we are now working with deaneries and parishes through a series of local discussions.

We want to enable church communities across the Diocese to grow in health and sustainability by:

- *Inspiring local church communities to be ambitious in generating appropriately local responses that enable them to flourish and grow*
- *Equipping and strengthening church communities by providing training, and by establishing new approaches and forms of support*
- *Adopting leadership models that support and develop ordained and lay leaders in enabling local church communities to be adaptive, and to grow spiritually, numerically and in depth of discipleship*
- *Promoting wise stewardship that ensures financial stability and provides the space to deliver a robust growth programme that increases the number of healthy and sustainable churches*

A message from the Area Dean

The Revd Canon Tim Williams writes:

The Kidderminster and Stourport Deanery includes a mix of both rural and urban parishes, from churches on the border of Herefordshire on the West to the edge of Bromsgrove towards the East. The deanery is relatively new and is undergoing some pastoral reorganisation. We are a supportive Deanery looking to see how we can work smarter together. Chapter meets every other month and we have an annual meal with spouses in January. We are hoping to resurrect the away day (an overnight stay) and other things which may be beneficial to our ministry.

Our immediate challenge is to implement as much of our plan as possible, to look at our work with children and young people and work on various possibilities for the future. As Team Vicar you will be a valued member of both Chapter and Deanery Synod.

Contact us

Thank you for reading right to the end. We know how challenging it is when looking for a new post, and so we will be praying for all those who read this profile, and ask you in turn to pray for us, that reader and parish both might see that the Lord's will be done.

Please contact us via the Parish Office either via email office@kidderminstereast.org.uk or by phone on 01562 822131. You can also reach us via David Hildred on 01562 743895, or 07906 156239, or via email, d.hildred@kidderminstereast.org.uk. Our website is: [The Parish of Kidderminster East](#)

Jn 13:34-35 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another"