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CHRISTCHURCH-CHELTEMHAM.ORG
Thank you so much for your interest in Christ Church.

Our prayer is that this profile will help you to hear God’s call, whether it is to join Christ Church Cheltenham and lead us in shared growth, or to go to an equally rewarding ministry elsewhere in God’s Kingdom. We want it to allow you to interpret our dreams, discern our gifts, and understand our weaknesses. To that end, this profile is the product of a broad conversation both within the congregation and outside it, with our friends and neighbours. We sought to build a shared understanding of what we have become, and what we seek to be.

This document is the result. It first describes the life we currently share and goes on to offer a frank assessment of our present, and a hopeful description of our possible future.

We are a single-parish benefice blessed with a gifted and diverse congregation – we have inherited a Grade 2* listed iconic and well-loved building. Currently, we have an electoral roll of 196, down from 268 three years ago. Yet we are convinced Christ Church has a powerful future, as God uses us to transform lives and build his Kingdom. We are excited to meet those men and women who believe they might play this central role in that future, unlocking our gifts by means of theirs.

The heart of this document is the Person Specification. This is a description of the gifts we believe our church needs to return to growth. It builds on the two key sections Our Present and Our Future which set out what our next incumbent will face, and what we hope, under God, we will become under their leadership.
OUR PARISH

Christ Church is a demographically varied urban parish just outside the historic centre of Cheltenham, containing a mix of impressive period properties, nursing homes, schools, a large new housing development and social housing. The parish serves the areas of Lansdown and Alstone. Although there are within the parish boundaries some expensive properties, there are also areas of significant deprivation, some of which are hidden in numerous flats behind the facades of large Georgian terraces. In the immediate vicinity of the church is Airthrie Prep School, a number of boarding houses belonging to Cheltenham Ladies’ College, two nursing homes, Christ Church Primary School and Gloucester Road Primary School.
WORSHIP – FACING GOD

STYLE OF WORSHIP

At the very core of our life together is our desire to express, enjoy, and develop our shared experience of God’s presence through worship in ways that respect the breadth of our individual experiences. We value preaching, and we value music. We cherish words, and we cherish silence. We love times of celebration and times of stillness. In our corporate worship we have a keen awareness that we are standing on holy ground.

Christ Church began life at the height of Victorian evangelicalism, but the congregation has remained open to other influences. Our worship and teaching are the product of many generations of cautious but faithful exploration.

These days our evangelicalism is open and reflective rather than tribal, self-critical rather than triumphalist. We strive to broaden our congregation’s spiritual experiences by carefully balancing old and new and by bringing in elements of different traditions. Our worship is liturgical, but our liturgy is open to the needs of the moment and very often specially composed or curated from authorised material. Worship is not a matter of following a script. The emphasis in the main Sunday morning service is on creativity within (largely unspoken) limits. We are led by a robed SATB choir and a lively, acoustic worship group, as well as a splendid organ. We quite often make use of all these musical forces in a single act of worship.

Our Sunday pattern of worship begins quietly with 8am Communion (15-20 attendees) followed by our main 10.30am service (150) of Parish Communion (twice a month), All Age Worship (once a month) or Morning Worship (once a month). Afterwards we enjoy refreshments together in the Parish Centre. Following the monthly All Age Worship, at 12 noon there is a Shortened Communion (6-10).

Our monthly evening service may be Choral Eucharist/ Evensong at 6.30pm (15-20) or a special service including those which allow for exploration of alternative forms of worship.

Monday – Friday we have Morning Prayer 8.45am (7) in the Side Chapel and Communion at 10.30am on Wednesday mornings (10-15).

At Christmas our atmospheric Carols by Candlelight service attracts a congregation of 400. On Christmas Eve afternoon we hold our family-friendly Christingle services. These are held at both 3.30pm and 5.30pm in order to cater for the large numbers attending (1,000 combined).

Our midweek activity focuses on Scripture. Long-established homegroups meet weekly for bible study and fellowship. During Lent and Advent, a larger proportion of us study scripture together, in depth, with off-the-shelf resources or perhaps using homegrown materials developed by our clergy and Readers.

In recent years, our emphasis has been on inclusion and we reflect regularly on how our worship can convey this welcome from the point of view of the newcomer or occasional attendee. Our former vicar also challenged us to re-examine our beliefs about human sexuality, without seeking to lead us to any definite position.
CLERGY AND READERS TEAM

We have four experienced licenced Readers and one retired priest who all make a significant contribution towards the planning and leadership of the services and who, in their different ways, maintain and enrich a high quality of preaching. The Christ Church family has appreciated and benefitted from consistently good preaching and teaching both during the services and weekday evening courses with the team playing an important teaching role in ways such as leading Lent groups, creating in-house course materials and contributing to away days throughout the year.

We have often been a training ground for curates and it is hoped that this practice will continue in the future. It’s a source of joy when members of our congregation come forward for ordination or Reader training and we support them through this. Clergy and Readers take part in regular ministry team meetings to evaluate and plan programmes of services in collaboration with the Director of Music and Worship Group Leader.

MUSIC FOR WORSHIP

Within our services music is led by the choir, organ and worship group. Music is chosen collaboratively with the Clergy Readers team to serve the chosen service themes and occasions. Hymns A&MNS and Songs of Fellowship are our main resources although we are drawing increasingly on the riches available from other material.

Since 1845 Christ Church has been blessed with a robed SATB choir, a tradition unbroken to this day. Leading worship regularly on Sundays, the choir has an extensive music library supporting the musical settings in the liturgy. On special occasions the choir delivers to a high standard, when, for example, leading worship in Cathedrals (Coventry Cathedral, Oct 2019) and is well represented at Evensong. However, on typical Sunday mornings, while there are quality singers who take justifiable pride in the choir, numbers are near minimum viable. The contribution of the choir is valued by the congregation so we would welcome engagement to help grow numbers again so that we can offer a wider range of music in our worship.

The choir is run by our Director of Music who receives remuneration.

Led from the piano, 8-13 voices and a range of instruments, the Worship Group contributes most Sundays, with members from 7–70 years old. Music is selected to support the liturgy and service themes, choosing from contemporary songs, chants, re-imagined hymns and appropriate music from beyond the faith community. The annual Christingle services are a high-spot where the group performs live seasonal music from secular to sacred.
MINISTRY – FACING EACH OTHER

Within the church our sense of love and responsibility for each other is expressed in a variety of ways.

Home Groups

There are six long established home groups which meet for Bible study and discussions; importantly they also provide fellowship and support for their members. Combined membership of 30-40.

Pastoral Team

The team has recently grown in numbers and now has fourteen volunteers who do their best to help members of the Christ Church family who are in need of support for a variety of reasons. They meet as a team every two months for the purpose of allotting any new responsibilities and for further training as the need arises.

Prayer Ministry

A committed team of people are available during our main services to pray privately with those who need it.

Home Communion

One of our Readers organises a monthly rota so that the team regularly administer communion to members of the church family who are housebound, in a care home or hospital. This ministry is much appreciated by the nursing homes within our parish.

Parish Picnic

One of the ways in which we try to unite the different groups of the Christ Church family and invite newcomers is our annual picnic where we have an afternoon...
playing games, eating and relaxing together at the Cotswold family home of church members.

Parish Weekend Away

A further opportunity to gather as a whole church family occurs approximately every two years when we go away to spend a weekend together. Here we get to know others better in a pleasant setting but also have space and time to pray together or privately, and to focus on a particular topic introduced by a guest speaker. There is ample opportunity for people to relax, eat good food and generally enjoy the venue and surrounding area.

Youth and Children’s Work

Sunday groups for our young people are well-established and are co-ordinated by our Team Leader for Youth and Children’s Work (a remunerated post). For those at pre-school and KS1 (ages four to seven) we run Scramblers, for those at KS2 (ages seven to 11) we have Explorers, and for those in secondary school, up to 15 years old, we have Pathfinders. There is currently no provision for those above 15. The very young are catered for by our warm and friendly crèche. Overall weekly numbers range from nine to twenty from an overall ‘pool’ of forty regular attenders.

We currently use the ecumenical material Roots as our resource, which follows the lectionary readings each week, so – we hope – allowing for some good Sunday lunch discussions across the family about what both adults and children have learned that morning. Last year we used a home-grown Christian basics curriculum looking at the main story of the Bible, from Genesis through to Revelation. We will probably return to this periodically. Children are engaged and appear both to enjoy and to learn in their groups. The challenges facing us include finding enough leaders for the groups we have; maintaining engagement with families and their children as the children grow older; and finding the right provision for those right at the top of our age groups. It is also noticeable that the numbers at the youngest age group, Scramblers, are much lower than they used to be.
MISSION – FACING OUR COMMUNITY

The Parish Centre

The Parish Centre, attached to the main church building, enables us to embrace and serve our local community. Halls and rooms are full of life and activity 7 days a week from early morning to late at night catering for both church and community activities, e.g. fitness, parties, choirs, drama, adult education. It is used daily during term-time by Christ Church Playgroup. For many years we have been home to Rainbows, Brownies and Guides groups who participate in our main worship services on special occasions. Dedicated church members also host our own lively weekly Mothers and Toddlers group and Friendship Club lunches, teas and talks which for many years now have attracted new faces to our church. We also enjoy welcoming schools and organisations to our church and Parish Centre for their concerts and celebrations.

The foyer area, The Hub, enjoys a reputation in the town for hosting vibrant art exhibitions and talks. The Music Room provides a base for our choir and their regular Friday rehearsals. The kitchen and a range of toilets provide for the needs of all user groups.

On Sunday mornings all the rooms in the Parish Centre are occupied with young people’s activities followed by post-service refreshments and socialising.
Friendship Club

Run by members of Christ Church this is a regular activity much-appreciated by those in the older age-range both from the church and beyond. Twice-monthly on Wednesdays, beginning with morning coffee and a short Communion service, it provides a welcome opportunity to spend most of the day socialising with friends old and new through an exercise class, Lunch Club and Afternoon Tea meetings in the Harwood Hall. After lunch a speaker is arranged to entertain and inform before tea and cake are enjoyed together. During the summer weeks members can enjoy outings and a holiday together.

Evangelism

Alongside the healthy and happy relationships we enjoy with our community, interactions are also focused specifically on gospel-spreading initiatives such as the Alpha course, Resolve and personal mentoring (1-2-1). With no shortage of ideas and energy, there is a commitment and desire to develop this area further.

Family Time meets twice a term in Gloucester Road Primary School with the aim of building meaningful relationships with families both in and out of the church. It is run by two members of our church with a team of 12 volunteers. Attendance is around 20-25 children and 12-15 adults. Sessions include games, themed activities/crafts for about an hour, Bible story and teaching, and finish with a meal together.

Prayer Visiting

Each summer we visit hundreds of homes in our parish in teams of two, in order to remind our neighbours of God’s presence and to offer prayer support for whatever they feel comfortable sharing with us. Occasionally we pray on the spot as circumstance leads, but usually we are gathering requests for prayer which are then read out and held before God in a special evening act of worship to which residents have been invited.

Christ Church Playgroup

Operating throughout the Parish Centre, the playgroup was formed in 1979 by members of Christ Church and is regarded by the church as part of its outreach to the community. Ofsted-inspected, qualified staff provide care each term-time weekday through full or half day sessions for children from 2yrs-5yrs. Many then join Christ Church Primary School. On special occasions the children come into church for their own acts of worship.

Schools

Our connections with local schools take many forms. Regular school assemblies have been led by our clergy at our two neighbouring primary schools and Airthrie Prep School. Church members and the Incumbent sit as Foundation Governors on Christ Church Primary School (CCPS) Board of Governors. The Headteacher of this school describes the relationship with the church as the strongest he’s experienced in a career in church schools and he would very much like to continue this tradition. We also run two teams of volunteers to lead Open the Book assemblies at CCPS and Gloucester Road Primary School. Both schools have collaborated with us in the last 3 years through iSingPop workshops, culminating in concerts where we have welcomed parish and schools together into our space. We have warm links with Cheltenham Ladies’ College who, in addition to special services, eg Confirmation, worship with us on Sunday evenings 2 or 3 times a term. Again, this is an arrangement valued by the school and we hope will be continued with our new incumbent.
Churches Together, Clusters

In addition to our contribution to Cheltenham Deanery, Christ Church has maintained links with local churches outside the Church of England in a local Cluster. The most regular contact is between the clergy, but these partnerships have had some wider benefits. Our adult baptisms by full-immersion are carried out at Salem Baptist church. Members of Gas Green help with our Family Time outreach service. Christ Church and C3 church co-founded the Christians Against Poverty Debt Centre which is hosted at C3 and supported by a coalition of Cheltenham churches.

Mission Partners

We have long-established links with and contribute financially to CMS, The Matilda Project and Mission Without Borders. Previously 10% now 5% of our annual income, in addition to proceeds from the Fête, is given to our mission partners and charities selected by the World Mission Committee.

Arts and Culture

In addition to hosting regular concerts and art exhibitions, Christ Church has been one of the leading lights in hosting, promoting and supporting the Christian Arts Festival in Cheltenham. Since its inauguration in 2016, the Festival offers a programme that attracts, entertains and challenge all ages, those of any faith or of none. The charity’s vision is to celebrate God through the diversity of creative artistic talent given by Him. As the festival was founded by two Christ Church members, there is a shared intention to grow the Church through arts and inter-faith engagement.

The choral tradition here is one we are proud of and, together with the Organ and Steinway Boston grand piano, has contributed to our reputation in the town as a welcoming space for musical events of all sorts. The church interior has an acoustic much admired by musicians and choral societies and we use this as a wonderful opportunity to entice people into our sacred space who otherwise might never do so.

Coffee Concerts

We delight in offering our neighbouring community this regular series of high-quality live music concerts, including piano and instrumental recitals, jazz quintets, vocal, Brass by Candlelight, choral, organ, orchestral and chamber programmes. These are short events followed by home-made refreshments, usually on Saturday mornings or Sunday afternoons to allow accessibility to all. It has been a joy to see audience members then becoming part of our congregation.

Fête

Each summer we hold our fête in the church building and forecourt. The congregation and wider community enjoy time together whilst raising thousands of pounds which is then distributed by the World Mission Committee to our church mission partners and charitable causes.

Outreach Magazine and Communications

Outreach is published 10 times a year, compiled by our Editor, containing articles, news and details of church events and is available throughout the parish. It is one of our main lines of communication, together with the weekly Pew Leaflet and website.
The Parish Office

The Parish Office is staffed by three part-time paid employees who support the life and ministry of our church and its community. Our Halls Complex Manager manages the main Church building as well as the bookings and running of our busy Parish Centre. Our Vicar’s Secretary/Electoral Roll Officer has the experience of being secretary for the previous two vicars of Christ Church. We also have a Parish Administrator, herself a vicar in another parish, who oversees the smooth production of worship materials, rotas etc.

Parochial Church Council

The PCC meets every two months and is supported by a number of committees. These meet between three and six times a year and are responsible for reporting back to the PCC. Currently these comprise Finance, Standing and Personnel, Environment, Evangelism, Fabric and Organ, Halls Management, Pastoral, World Mission, Worship, Youth and Children’s Work.
OUR PEOPLE

Church Wardens

Clergy Readers Team

Director of Music  Worship Group Leader  Treasurer  Chair of PCC  YCW Leader

Admin Team
Finances at Christ Church have been prudently managed over a number of years and the accounting function has strong lay leadership.

Following the budgeting process the Annual Budget is presented to the congregation on Budget Sunday in January where the financial objectives of the year are laid out. Calls for giving have been fairly light touch as being a matter between the giver and God. Historically Budget Sunday has not been an effective trigger for raising members’ giving.

A number of the community participate in the Diocesan direct debit Parish Giving scheme and have elected for an automatic cost of living inflator. Those not part of the Diocesan scheme can still donate by Standing Order or use the Gift Aid envelopes in pews and at the back of church. The plate is not passed around during the liturgy.

In recent years bequests have featured sporadically in our income and although not used to support the day to day activities of the church they have helped to bolster reserves used for major projects/repairs.

Christ Church has a few financial principles it has sought to maintain over the years:

- It contributes the cost of a Vicar and a half to Parish Share as its contribution to wider mission in the Diocese
- It currently ‘tithes’ 5% of its income to support wider mission in the UK and the world – historically this was 10% but this has dropped to current levels due to constraints
- All staff employed are paid at least the rate set by the Living Wage Foundation – currently £9 per hour
- We have a reserves policy which sets a band of £25-75K of unrestricted funds to cover the church for extraordinary events.

Overall giving has seen consistent falls especially in the last five years. This can be seen in the graph below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Average Monthly Giving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>£14,192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>£13,668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>£12,772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>£11,671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>£11,000*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*2019 is a forecast

These drops mean that total annual giving has decreased approximately from £170K in 2015 to £130K in 2019.

It is noteworthy that income trends correlate broadly with the drops in attendance and electoral roll over the same period.

Against this background the church community has continued to have a strong sense of God’s providence although we are aware that we need to consider strategies to address imbalances between giving and expenditure.
Built in 3 years and consecrated in 1840, Christ Church has been a landmark place of worship in Cheltenham for nearly 180 years, during which time it has adapted to changes in worship and the needs of the community. The most recent example was the refurbishment and development of what is now the Parish Centre alongside the church. This has become a vibrant community resource as described above.

Maintenance of this Grade 2* listed building is a major task for the church Fabric Team with many of the smaller tasks done by our members using their DIY and professional skills with the support of the PCC.

All major work is overseen by our church architect, with DAC approval and done by professional contractors. During this year improvement to the drainage at the east end of the church has been completed and new boilers are in the process of being installed. We are now in a position where we can engage with the question of how we might adapt and update the interior of the church to accommodate a variety of forms of worship, performance and arts events – a space flexible and equipped for contemporary needs.

Further details are given in the Appendix.
OUR PRESENT

The Holy Spirit’s work among us is seen in flurries of growth, energy and zeal. The congregation is ethnically diverse. A drop-in service aimed at families with young children is proving popular with people from the local community school, who we had previously struggled to reach because of our identification with our own primary school. The choir has shrunk but the music group is growing, as is our team of licenced Readers. The Parish Centre is a hugely popular resource and brings many people through our doors, and from time to time, into worship as well. The quality of pastoral care, the warmth and affection that binds us together across barriers of age, class and ethnicity, are all palpable and continue to develop. Each year brings new initiatives in discipling, and more recently, in evangelism.

Yet it is clear that we need to make significant changes to the way we use our time and resources. Our church life is not sustainable in its current form. There are exciting new initiatives and opportunities, but these compete for resources with long-established practices which have not been reviewed. We also need to address some long-standing issues which we have not been able to discuss, let alone resolve.

For many years our congregation consisted of three main groups:

- A large group of established older members
- Families with older children
- A constantly changing group of families with younger children, attracted by the link with our popular primary school.

This model has run into difficulties in recent years:

- The cohort of senior members is becoming smaller as illness and death take their toll
- We are not retaining the families of older children as effectively as we used to
- Fewer families are attending because of the link to the school.

The impact is seen in lower weekly attendance overall, far fewer children, particularly at the lower end of the age range, and reduced congregational giving, offset by increases in income from legacies.
We have struggled to respond to these unwelcome changes because we have not addressed some deep-seated cultural issues:

- The burden of prayer for the church, in the way it is currently organised, is not equally shared. Termly prayer meetings are sparsely attended and there is a frail culture of informal shared prayer, though Morning Prayer is a lifeline for those who attend.

- Our very openness and curiosity has sometimes led to a diffuse and uncertain identity. A lack of a strong identity or sense of distinctive calling makes it difficult to make choices about what we do and don’t do. We are constantly at risk of doing too much for too little purpose.

- Christ Church is an easy place to join, but it is also an easy place to drift away from. Too many of us appear to have only a slight emotional connection, manifest in very skewed giving, attendance and volunteering profiles. The church is reliant for its too many activities on too few people.

These issues have conspired to make us slow to recognise the passing of the old model, and to make it difficult to discern, and resource, the emergence of a new one. They have also made it difficult for us to reach a stable consensus about how we use the building which we have inherited. The fabric as a whole is well-maintained and the Parish Centre is a successful building. There is no crisis. But nor is there a clear way forward. There is agreement that something must change, but no clarity about what or why or when. In particular, we have been unable to articulate exactly how development of the worship space will serve and enhance our ministry and meet the needs of those we seek to reach with the Gospel.

**USUAL SUNDAY ATTENDANCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>190</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>217</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OUR FUTURE

Our Parish Profile has sought to tell a fair and open story of both the strengths of our community and also its challenges. There is a tangible sense of eagerness and excitement about what God has in store for us. The metaphor of a becalmed ship conveys a sense of expectancy. The vacancy has shown that as a lay community we have a huge range of talents which we want to re-energise and deploy to work with the person God has already chosen to join with us as Vicar.

What do we think will be the important tasks ahead? As a congregation we must first gain a clear sense of our purpose. We have taken the decision that we must wait for our new Vicar before developing a strategy for the future. This is because we need someone to assist us in gaining a clear consensus on how to deal with the big issues facing us:

• A growth strategy – our congregation particularly over recent years has aged and diminished – what should our strategy be for growth?

• How do we develop our church building for the needs of our congregation and the wider community? This building is both a threat to our future survival and an amazing resource for growth.

• A growth strategy cannot ignore the financial needs of our church community. We have a large church and halls complex and the income we receive is currently not at sufficiently high levels. Increased giving and possibly income from other sources needs to feature in any plans.

• Who is the Holy Spirit guiding us to focus our energies on welcoming? Many comment on the strong sense of welcome and love which Christ Church extends to all. This has been a feature for a very long time. Christ Church has shown that it can welcome and sustain a wonderfully diverse congregation.

• There is a view that to meet the challenges ahead Christ Church needs to rediscover its sense of community outside of formal worship to bring the community together and give it a greater sense of cohesiveness.

• Christ Church is a community of talented individuals. To be able to meet the challenges of vision creation, a strategy for growth and the work that flows from this we must find ways of fully engaging and empowering all our people. Christ Church has a clear understanding that our work with the Vicar must be collaborative and have a culture of empowerment to achieve the ambitions we believe God has for us.

• We need to rediscover the centrality of prayer and increase our openness to discern the will of God through His Holy Spirit.
PERSON SPECIFICATION

We believe these challenges call for someone with the following gifts and experience:

**Leadership**

“God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power, of love and of clear-thinking” (2 Tim 1v7). You can catalyse our vision and collective responsibility for, visible congregational growth. Your experience will help navigating groups towards consensus on the big decisions being faced. You look for giftings within the congregation and release them to serve and flourish within a constructive and supportive partnership. You are someone who can excite and empower us to act more courageously for God.

**Priority of Prayer**

You can inspire us to a deeper commitment to corporate prayer and to its place as the powerhouse of our church life together.

**Church Community Builder**

You are ready to support and promote initiatives which strengthen caring multi-generational relationships and sense of cohesion within our congregations and to find a fresh energetic direction for our youth and children’s work.

**Outward Looking**

You can demonstrate a track record of identifying and developing effective mission strategies and new models of engagement which intrigue and attract those who are yet to encounter God.

**Inclusive**

You can give us a sharper focus and practical training on how to embrace and engage newcomers; to model what “All are welcome in this place” really looks like.

**Creative/Responsive**

Whilst cherishing that which is good in our worship traditions you draw with creative eyes on sources such as the expressive arts to frame worship that is fit for a vibrant faith-filled life in the 21st century. Ready to rethink if ideas aren’t working.

**Major Re-Ordering Project**

With the possibility that Christ Church may embark on a major church development, you will be confident and energetic in leading and inspiring a community through the challenges and excitement that this might offer. Whilst others will do the project management, you will be adept at delegating, empowering and gaining consensus within this community.
The Vicarage, Malvern Road, is a large 1960s house providing ample space for family life and for entertaining: entrance hall, ground floor toilet, newly fitted kitchen, utility room, dining room lounge, four bedrooms with master en suite; it also has a large study off the entrance hall, a garage and parking space for three cars. It is currently undergoing full redecoration in addition to the new kitchen and en suite to master bedroom. There are generous gardens to the front and particularly to the rear of the house, both of which provide wonderful views of the church tower. The garden at the back of The Vicarage provides ample room for family life, entertaining and peace, tranquility and privacy when you need it. The Vicarage is about fifty metres down the road from Christ Church, and Christ Church Primary School is a further hundred metres away.

Well within a mile radius of The Vicarage you will find a number of small shops, a large Waitrose, Cheltenham Ladies’ College Sports Centre and Cheltenham Spa railway station.
b. OUR TOWN

Cheltenham is a Regency spa town on the edge of the Cotswolds in Gloucestershire. It has a population of 117,000. Since the discovery of mineral springs in 1716 it has been a holiday destination and has a number of internationally renowned and historic schools. The town is home to two campuses of the University of Gloucestershire.

We are known as a Festival Town, hosting festivals of national and international repute, including the Literature Festival, Science Festival, Jazz Festival, Music Festival, Cricket Festival and more recently the Christian Arts Festival. There is a vibrant night-time economy of clubs, bars and restaurants, theatre and concert venues. Cheltenham is also famous for horse racing and the Gold Cup is the main event of the Cheltenham Festival held every March at the Cheltenham Racecourse. Cheltenham Town FC, ‘Robins’, play in League Two.

Much of Cheltenham is relatively wealthy, with lower unemployment, although there are areas of deprivation and specific need. The major employers in the area are GCHQ and UCAS as well as insurance, banking, aerospace, education, power generation, sport and leisure. Cheltenham is expected to grow significantly in the next few years, with a Cyber Park in the west of the town creating new skilled jobs and an urban extension of about 5,000 new homes being planned to the north west of the town.

Cheltenham has excellent transport links with the M5 nearby and direct trains to London, Birmingham, Bristol and beyond.
### c. CHURCH BUILDING

#### History

The church was built between 1837 and 1840 using local Cotswold limestone from Dodwell Hill Quarry near Withington, all set on a plinth of sandstone from the Forest of Dean. This stone has suffered from the effect of 150 years of acid rain erosion leading to many of the decorative crockets having been removed for safety as were all the original stone ‘pineapple’ finials on the pinnacles by the 1950s. The ending of urban coal burning and coal gas production should have reduced the air pollution and further stonework erosion may have been arrested. The roof and floors are supported on large wooden beams that are generally in good condition having been treated for woodworm in some infected areas. The tower was extensively refurbished and the roof repaired and re leaded in 1977 but regular and quinquennial inspections are now done to the parapets to check for any stone movement.

From 1875 and through to 1893 the interior was extensively reordered starting with removal of the north transept gallery to relocate the organ followed by removal of the box pews to install the choir dais and later in 1887 to install the current pews. The old central pulpit was removed and from 1888 the decorated Apse and Reredos were added with the marble pulpit and communion rail, all were completed by 1893. The stained glass memorial windows in the aisles were installed starting at the turn of the century.

More recent changes were done in 1958 when the pews in front of the organ case were removed to allow the building of the small chapel and for this, the organ console was moved to the south side of the choir. By 1981 the semi-circular steps and communion rail and table had been installed at the front of the dais with the glass cross hanging above.

#### Present

The church is largely unchanged except for the temporary removal of the pews from the south transept to relocate the choir vestries while work was done in the late 1990s to build a new hall and develop the Parish Centre by refurbishing the old school rooms. This work was done in preference to repairs and reordering of the church in order to give priority to facilities for outreach activity in the community, especially for children. We are now returning to the consideration of reordering the church to embrace new forms of worship and to expand the variety of activities that can be held in the church. After completion of the Parish Centre, urgent external repairs to the eroded stone work, faded paintwork, leaking windows and blocked gutters has been done and internal re-decoration of the vestries and the well-used Parish Centre rooms has also been done.

#### Future

Over recent years, many ideas and suggestions for reordering have come forward and faded in popularity, usually after the true costs and benefits have been established. The latest thoughts are more modest but still based upon creating a space which provides the necessary flexibility to accommodate different expressions of worship and performance for both the Christ Church family and the wider town community over the coming years.
### d. FINANCE

#### Year ended 31 December 2018 vs 2019 Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019 Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INCOME</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collections, Donations and Gift Aid</td>
<td>£133,803</td>
<td>£150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall Rental Income</td>
<td>£36,706</td>
<td>£36,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fête Proceeds</td>
<td>£5,089</td>
<td>£4,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td>£8,106</td>
<td>£8,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
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<td><strong>£198,000</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019 Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXPENDITURE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish Share</td>
<td>£97,667</td>
<td>£103,527</td>
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<tr>
<td>Giving to World Mission</td>
<td>£18,201</td>
<td>£11,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>£37,350</td>
<td>£37,500</td>
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<td>Utility Bills</td>
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<td>£16,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fabric &amp; Maintenance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Expenditure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parish Weekend deficit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
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<td>£1,380</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditure</strong></td>
<td><strong>£202,234</strong></td>
<td><strong>£197,907</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surplus/Deficit</strong></td>
<td><strong>-£18,530</strong></td>
<td><strong>£93</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2018</th>
<th>2019 Budget</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development Fund Brought Forward</td>
<td><strong>£89,390</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Legacies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Repairs and fees</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Development Fund Carried Forward</strong></td>
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e. CONGREGATIONAL DATA

USUAL SUNDAY ATTENDANCE

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<td>2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>170</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>170</td>
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BAPTISMS

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>9 (1 adult)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>12 (1 adult)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>19 (1 adult)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>11 (1 adult)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>14 (2 adults)</td>
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ELECTORAL ROLL

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<tr>
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<th>Electors</th>
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<tr>
<td>1996</td>
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<td>2002</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
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<td>2015</td>
<td>268</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>196</td>
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WEDDINGS

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>2018</th>
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<tr>
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EASTER ATTENDANCE

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