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A Summary

Who we are in Christ – St. Barnabas is an Inclusive Eucharistic church that works to bring God’s presence in word and sacrament to the whole community of Erdington. We strive to be a welcoming church gathering a diverse congregation together. We have a special connection with children and young people’s ministry and have a full-time Children and Youth Missioner, who works closely with local schools, runs our Youth Group and organises our well-established Messy Church activities.

Where we have come from

St. Barnabas is the parish church of Erdington, situated on the High street in the heart of the community since 1823. A number of Erdington residents have marked major life events in the church, and it is held fondly in the hearts of the community for all that it was, as well as all that it is now. In 2007 a devastating fire destroyed the Grade 2 listed building. A five-year restoration project began which restored the church and provided additional multi-use community spaces which are in use all day every day for the church and wider community and the many charitable and corporate causes who use the facilities.
The Church of England Birmingham

The Church of England Birmingham The Diocese of Birmingham is geographically small but contains a population of 1,499,586 people. It covers 294 square miles and contains 195 Church of England places of worship.

It is blessed with a rich mix of people from a wide range of national and ethnic backgrounds and, while largely urban, includes the significant presence of rural village communities. The City of Birmingham is a major centre of culture, education, commerce and industry, around which stand other boroughs and local communities each with their own individual character and history. The Diocese covers not only the city of Birmingham, but also the borough of Solihull, half of Sandwell, and parts of Worcestershire and Warwickshire. Alongside the historic Christian denominations are many younger church groupings and Christian networks, as well as the strong presence of other world faiths.

The Bishop of Birmingham, the Rt Revd David Urquhart, is urging parishes to prayerfully plan for outreach and growth, under the banner ‘Transforming Church’. The Bishop often uses a simple phrase that we want to see ‘more, and more confident Christians’. The Bishop of Aston, Rt Rev Anne Hollingshurst holds a brief across the diocese under this theme.

Any priest appointed to this Diocese, whatever their tradition, must be committed to engaging with those who have not yet come to faith, gathering people whose Christian allegiance has flagged, and developing lay leadership and responsibility in the cause of the Gospel. The Transforming Church programme is designed to assist parishes in this task.

People & Places (P&P) is a major change initiative in the Church of England Birmingham. It is the most significant step-change we have taken so far in re-imagining ministry to be sustainable and appropriate in the 21st Century and helping to ‘Set God’s People Free.’

The aim over the next five years is to increase the number of worshipping communities (“Growing churches at the heart of each community”) and the number of disciples and leaders participating in them (“more, and more confident Christians”), by:

- **re-imagining** how we transform and sustain ministry with collaborative and accountable teams of ordained and lay leaders, deployed justly across our diverse population;
- **developing and equipping** our potential leaders, so that each worshipping community has an identified leader and team, though not necessarily ordained, full-time or paid;
- **investing** in new church plants, fresh expressions of church and context specific ministries.
Our prayer is that, once implemented, the restructured diocese will be viable and financially sustainable for the long term, maintaining presence everywhere (albeit at a reduced level of paid posts), whilst supporting flourishing worshipping communities as the platform to build significant missional impact. By implementing P&P we are putting in place the platform for growth, rather than managing decline.

**The Deanery of Aston and Sutton Coldfield**

St Barnabas Erdington sits within the old deanery of Aston. From 1 May 2019 the new Deanery of Aston and Sutton Coldfield came into formal being through a Bishop’s order. This followed considerable diocesan and local consultation and no objections have been raised. The aim is to make a larger unit which will have more resources to share and bring our diversity closer together in Christian unity, ministry and mission. Under the People and Places Framework the new full time Area Dean will work alongside access to enhanced resources for parish supporting bookkeeping, buildings and HR functions. Through 2019 there will be an agreed process to shape and ‘launch’ this new deanery as the first larger unit within CofE Birmingham. We hope that by the end of 2020 we will have moved from our 13 Deaneries to 6 new ones.

Aston & Sutton Coldfield Deanery covers a ‘slice’ of the city region from one of the most deprived and industrial/post-industrial areas to the direct north of the city centre at the end of the A38M, where it meets the M6 expressway, an elevated stretch of motorway running across north-Birmingham. Moving further out it embraces the former Warwickshire Royal Town of Sutton Coldfield and some bordering rural and urban communities.

The Aston end is crossed by fixed road boundaries such as the A38 and M6 motorway and these influence relationships and evangelistic possibilities alike. It is largely without much green space and predominantly is poorer residential housing, estates and industrial/post-industrial areas. Sutton Coldfield may be part of Birmingham administratively, but it is not entirely “of” Birmingham with a range of socio-economic contexts; everything from gated mansions to social housing. There are first class schools and the delights of Sutton Park. It is mostly fairly comfortable suburbia, but with one rural multi church benefice and one parish covers an estate in north Birmingham. There is considerable change both in the suburban and post-industrial areas with regeneration, new housing, changing transport patterns and developing social infrastructure growing across the region according to local plans.
Across the area there are considerable medical, educational, industrial and recreational institutions including Good Hope Hospital in Sutton Coldfield and Aston Villa Football Club near the heart of the city.

The Deanery School (Primary) was established as a resource for all the churches of the former deanery of Sutton Coldfield, with the Area Dean usually serving on the Governing Body.

The deanery has 16 parishes and 24 Churches with a variety of ministry provision including full-time stipendiary, SSM, Readers and a variety of local lay ministers, all collaborating with a large number of voluntary officers and ministry leaders in the churches.

The chapter and Synod of the new deanery will be developing their arrangements for meeting and support under the new Area Dean. However, both former deaneries have traditionally had a strong ethos of clergy and lay support and both are keen to extend that to each other in their new arrangement. They have both been very willing to embrace the deanery developments and are keen to further grow their culture of mutual appreciation and support of their different contexts.
The Vicar we are looking for:

We asked the wider congregation to feedback on their hopes for a new vicar.

The key points raised were:

- A person of strong Christian faith
- Someone who will provide creative liturgy
- A person skilled in relating to people, who is a good communicator
- A good listener
- Someone who is flexible in how they deliver God’s message
- A person who will develop leadership in others
- An encourager
- A person with a sense of humour
- A person who can relate to a diverse congregation and community.
Church Centre Personnel and incumbent responsibilities.

St Barnabas Church Centre has extensive conference facilities for hire on both a commercial and charitable basis. It is headed up by a full time Centre Manager whose role includes the management of a busy Café which is open 6 days a week.

The centre employs 12 staff, in both full or part-time roles and includes a dedicated Marketing Function and Accounts role.

The Centre Manager, Marketing and Accounting Personnel, have regular meetings with an oversight committee who report back to the P.C.C.

The Centre and Café staff are supported on a daily basis by our Church Wardens and a small team of volunteers.

It is expected that the new incumbent would be part of the Centre oversight through the PCC but the business is intended to support the work of the church, managing a café is not the work of the church. No priest is expected to be responsible for staff Rota’s for example, but they will need to liaise with staff when arranging youth activities to ensure there is no clash with events in the church such as a job fair.

However the project to restore the rear churchyard will need the direction of the priest in charge. Although we have tried to progress this project the need to do things such as remove damaged headstones means it needs to be led by someone expert in canon law who understands the sensitivities of families in such a situation.

Finally our Children and Young Families Missioner reports to the priest in charge on all aspects of their work. St Barnabas places a high importance on mission to children and we seek a priest who has ideas and enthusiasm for bringing god’s love to our young people.
Broader Context

History

In 1824, with a population of under 2000, Erdington acquired a church of its own. At that time, Erdington was still a part of Aston, as it remained until 1894. The first stone of the building was laid by Earl Howe who had donated the land.

The church was first known as the St. Barnabas Chapel-of-ease, but in 1858, Erdington became a separate ecclesiastical district with its own Vicar. With a continually growing population, resulting from the overflowing of the town populations of Aston and Birmingham, the Church was considerably extended between 1893 and 1895. The enlargement included the building of North and South transepts a chancel with south aisle and provision of seating for 1,100 persons.

A Church House across the High St, was provided in 1911, by public subscription for the benefit of the people of Erdington. However, by 1983 it had become less utilised and the decision was taken to sell the Church House site and use the funds to build a hall and parish rooms within the roof space of the Church. In 2007, a disastrous fire, started by arsonists, almost totally destroyed the Church, leaving only the walls and tower standing and, after a period of site clearance and rebuilding, the Church was rededicated on 16th December 2012 by the Bishop of Birmingham.

Our Building

The modern church is now open to Erdington High Street through the creation of a new café space with a slate floor and glass curtain wall that gives excellent views of the town centre. The café is open Monday to Saturday while on Sundays we share tea and coffee in the café after the service.

The church also features a chapel and separate crèche area. The chapel is used on Wednesdays for our mid-week Eucharist and is open at other times to offer a quiet space where people can pray and reflect. The crèche, called the coracle, can be used for meetings during the week as its small size can be the right place for some meetings – for example, a charity that works with people with drug and alcohol problems uses the space regularly.

The church is open all day for private prayer, it offers a place of safety and sanctuary to some of those most in need in our community.
Where we are

Erdington is located approximately five miles north east of Birmingham City Centre.
It has a younger, more ethnically diverse population than average.
There is easy access to Birmingham City Centre, either by train, bus or by car.
Erdington Train station is on the Redditch-Birmingham New Street-Lichfield Cross-City Line. It’s just 12 Mins to Birmingham New Street from Erdington on the train and 16 Mins by bus to the City Centre.
The High Street is a mixture of shops, supermarkets and 3 Indoor Markets. There is also a walk-in medical centre open 365 days a year. Other amenities include a library, Skills Centre and a Leisure Centre, which opened in September 2017. This has a brand new sport and leisure facility-Gym, 25m pool and teaching pool, sauna and steam room.

Local Primary Schools
St Barnabas Church of England Primary School
Osbourne Primary School
Featherstone
Abbey Catholic School
Yenton Primary School

Local Secondary Schools
Erdington Academy
St. Edmund Campion Catholic School & Sixth Form Centre

Other Churches
Erdington Six Ways Baptist Church
Erdington Methodist Church
St Mary & St. John Catholic Church
Erdington Seventh Day Adventist Church
Erdington Abbey
Bethany Pentecostal Church
St. Constantine & Helen Orthodox Church
The Potters House
Oikos
Saint Barnabas Church/School relationship

It’s safe to say, that our relationship and link with the school, was strengthened when we lost our *spiritual home* due to the fire and the Head teacher and Governing Body at the time, kindly offered us the school to hire on Sundays and any Feast Days out of term time, of course!

In fact, there were some people who joined us around that time, who probably found us more accessible because we were worshipping in the school hall, as well as renewing older acquaintances with well-established members of the congregation.

While there are church visits from other schools, our naturally strong partnership with our own church school is not only mutually beneficial, but is also a means of continued support within the community and their encounters with church have included: whole school occasions (434 pupils) for special services during the festivals, Year 6 Leavers service and different Key Stage visits relating to various themes for the term.

In turn, we have had clergy visits to school for Assemblies, sometimes with a guest speaker from one of the other faiths, class talks, Stay & Pray, collaboration with the RE Coordinator, a weekly Drama group after school, invitation to Messy Church and occasionally some pastoral care with members of staff. We are now in the process of developing our Young Church/School link with our Children & Youth Missioner.

There have also been valuable links between the church and school, as a result of Baptisms, Weddings and even Funerals!

St. Barnabas Church of England Primary School:

“We are proud of our strong relationship with the church. Our mission statement and ethos is embedded within all that we do: so essentially the connections with the church is vital in our children’s spiritual and moral development. The whole school regularly attends church for services as part of our Collective Worship themes. Classes also visit as part of curriculum enrichment and our children clearly feel proud of their church. The staff and children enjoy the fortnightly led collective worship by the vicar; which is effective in supporting our shared Christian values”.

Executive Head and Head teacher
Section 4

Our church and related groups

Our Church – St Barnabas is a parish church in the modern catholic tradition where we aim to provide accessible and enjoyable worship with relevant liturgy, through which to hear God’s word, celebrate the sacraments and be sent out to be the Body of Christ incarnate in the world. We are committed to living out and expressing our faith in the unconditional love of God in Jesus Christ. We offer two weekly communion services on Wednesdays and Sundays at 10:30AM. Children who are baptized but not confirmed, and who have shown commitment to faith are also invited to receive communion after age appropriate preparation. Occasional offices are an important part of our engagement with the community. In 2019 so far there have been 3 weddings held in church as well as 14 baptisms and 4 funerals. Alongside funerals held in church our curate officiated at a number of funeral services held in local crematoria. Support during funeral visits has proven very important for our community and many have been led to become church regulars through that process. We also hold communion services in local residential homes (9 services this year) and hospices with the support of lay people from St Barnabas.

Our Values – we as a PCC affirm the dignity of same sex couples and have accordingly signed up to Inclusive Church. This commits us to being a church that celebrates and affirms every person and does not discriminate. We’ll continue to challenge the church where it continues to discriminate against people on grounds of disability, economic power, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity or sexuality. We believe in a Church which welcomes and serves all people in the name of Jesus Christ; which is scripturally faithful; which seeks to proclaim the gospel afresh for each generation; and which, in the power of the Holy Spirit, allows all people to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Jesus Christ.

Our Vision – St Barnabas has a special focus on children and young families. We employ a Children’s and Youth missioner from our own resources and run a successful messy church several times a year. We hope to build on this base through engagement with the community in church and our café. We arranged an Erdington fete this year at which the church was fully represented alongside all the many stalls. In the past we have worked closely with our local Baptist church and seek to build links with other churches in the area. We pray for a growing church that has an engaged congregation that is involved with the running of St Barnabas and feels able to bring their talents to our mission.
**Church worship style and congregation**

At St Barnabas there currently 99 on the Electoral Roll, 40% of whom live outside the Parish. Of these there are representatives from at least 11 different nations, with Nigerian being the largest community after White British.

There are on average 80-100 present with 15-25 children at a 10.30am main Sunday Service. At the Sunday service, which is always Eucharistic, cassock-alb and stole are the normal vesture of the priest. For festivals, a chasuble may be worn.

There are a team of servers who work on a rota basis with one each Sunday to do the work of crucifer and MC. Two of these are young teenagers.

The vessels and linens are prepared by a capable and experienced sacristan.

The musical director is a skilled musician and plays the organ and piano (and occasionally trumpet at the same time) ably for our services. We use a wide range of both older hymns and modern worship music and although we are not led by a choir, the congregation is used to picking up and singing new music.

The liturgy is currently adapted to reflect the church calendar with appropriate theological colours reflected in the priest’s stole and altar voile.

Young Church meets on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of every month, Harbour Heroes (4-7) Lighthouse Keepers (8+) have been the norm in the past but they are desperately in need of leaders to continue to facilitate the age group meetings. Every Sunday Toddling Tugboats meet in the crèche space and is used by under 4s with the supervision of their parents.

On 2nd, 4th and occasional 5th Sundays there is *All Age Worship* which whilst still being Eucharistic aims to be more age inclusive and include teaching to engage children as well as adults.
Church Groups and Organisations

St Barnabas has an active MOTHER’S UNION with 30 members who meet once a month on a Tuesday afternoon. This is an International Christian membership movement, actively supporting families and communities in need in the UK and worldwide since 1876.

There is also a CHURCH FELLOWSHIP (Formerly Women’s Fellowship). This also meets on a Tuesday afternoon once a month.

These groups have varied activities during the year and also support local projects such as providing hand knitted items for premature babies, items of toiletries for the local Women’s Refuge and Christmas cards for the Young Offenders Institute and Birmingham Prison. Items also go into the regular container that goes to Malawi.

Both these groups are open to men and women.

We have a keen group of people who ring the 8 Towers Bells each Sunday and for special occasions. Some of our congregation are part of the St Barnabas Hand Bells Ringers who play during the year (especially at Easter and Christmas) at various venues, including the local John Taylor Hospice.

Pastoral Care

We have a dedicated group of people who regularly take Holy Communion to those who are unable to attended church. They also visit two local care homes for a short Communion Service.

In addition, the church is open for quiet space and is a place of sanctuary for people from the local area who are in particular crises and come seeking support or a listening ear.
St. Barnabas Church Centre

St. Barnabas was rebuilt to create a space of beauty and solace for worship and to provide additional, quality facilities for organisations and groups to use and benefit from.

The church has flexible conference and meeting rooms available. We have a fully equipped commercial kitchen. Room rental is an important source of revenue for the church as well as being an integral part of our community engagement plan. Policy on room rental reflects the values of the church and is developed in conjunction with our full-time staff and the PCC.

Alongside the Harbour Cafe, we have purpose built, high quality meeting and event spaces.

The Lighthouse is our large conference/events room on the second floor and the Anchor room is a flexible meeting space on the first floor which can be divided into two rooms. We also consider suitable requests for hiring our Coracle crèche room. All spaces have, or can be provided with AV equipment, have free Wi-Fi and we offer a variety of catering options.

Regular room hirers include organisations such as the NHS, local councils, charities and community help groups, local schools and a variety of businesses.

Reduced room hire rates are offered for charities and local charitable organisations that are focussed on the needs of the immediate area and/or rely on fundraising and donations as their income source.

So, whilst we don't seek to make a surplus from room hire, it is important to raise income to meet the cost of and improve facilities and to further uplift and enhance the life of individuals and the local community.
Section 5
St. Barnabas Vicarage

The Vicarage is located on Church Road and is less than two minutes walk from the church. A recent property inspection confirms that the property is in good clean condition throughout and has a large, maintained garden. Features include 4 bedrooms, a study/office, dining room, large lounge, a kitchen and utility room and a garage. Further details on the Vicarage can be requested from the PCC.
Contact details
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