



Profile for The Heart of England Parishes



**Bidford on Avon
Binton
Exhall with
Wixford
Salford Priors
Temple Grafton**

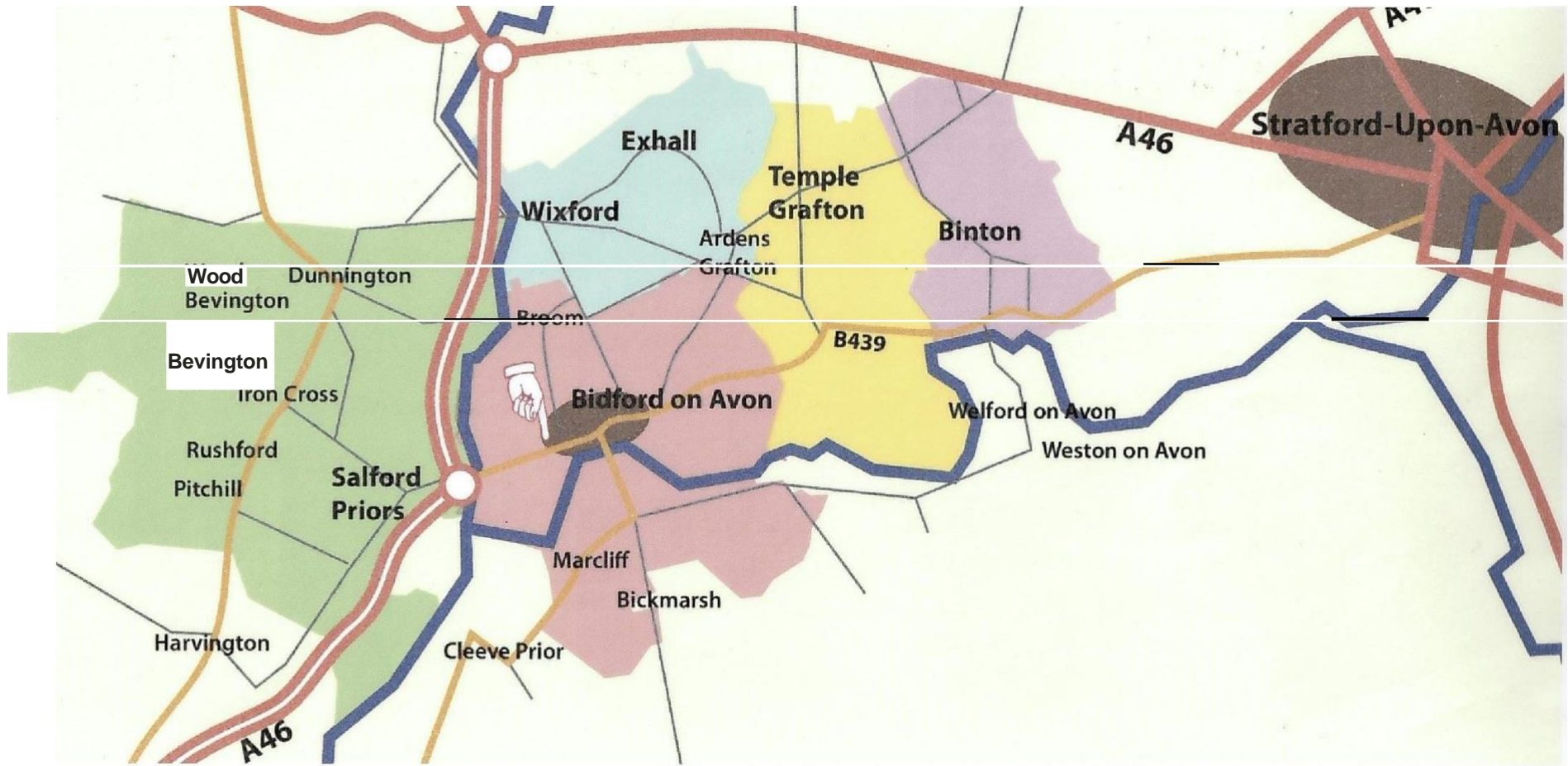
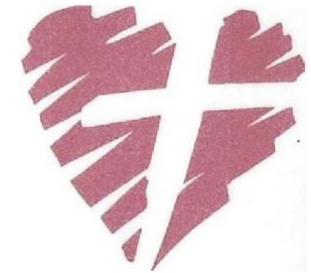


We are praying for a new Rector to lead our team, share our vision and work alongside us in these villages. **Might this be you? If so please read on.**



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

Heart of England Parishes



Contents:

Page	
4	<u>Area Dean's Introduction</u>
5	<u>Who are we?</u>
6	<u>What do we offer to you?</u>
7	<u>Where would you live?</u>
8	<u>What are we like?</u>
9	<u>Where is Jesus leading us?</u>
10	<u>Personal qualities</u>
11-12	<u>Photos</u>
13-27	<u>Appendix 1 – The Six Churches</u>
28-32	<u>Appendix 2 – The Four Church Schools</u>
33-37	<u>Appendix 3 - Further Information (service patterns, finances etc.)</u>

Area Dean's Introduction



The Heart of England benefice falls within Alcester Deanery - a very beautiful part of rural Warwickshire and a deanery with over 30 churches. Alcester, Studley, Bidford-on-Avon, and Henley-in-Arden are the largest population centres. We currently have a planned deployment of 6 full-time incumbents, and 3 House for Duty priests, supported by many helpful and valued retired clergy. Alcester Minster benefice is a Coventry Diocesan Mission Hub with a rural focus and has an additional Associate Minister to support this initiative.

We can offer you a very warm, supportive Deanery Chapter where we enjoy good relationships, meet regularly for prayer, fellowship, and mutual support, and share a common heart for the growth and flourishing of the mission of our churches across our Deanery and beyond. All our recent appointments have been clergy who enjoy working collegially.

We have been exploring radically new ways of sharing ministry across ecclesiastical boundaries to develop a truly Deanery-wide approach, incorporating the existing clergy and those yet to be appointed.

We are looking for the next incumbent of the Heart of England benefice to be a Rural Pioneer who enjoys working with clergy colleagues, and who will be both the incumbent rooted in the benefice, and also take a lead in enabling a particular aspect of mission across the wider deanery as well as in their own benefice. There is plenty of scope for the person appointed to offer an aspect of their ministry skill set which they particularly enjoy. This aspect of the role is outlined in the Deanery Prospectus. We trust that this added dimension will enrich ministry in the parish as well as benefitting the wider deanery.

We look forward to welcoming a creative colleague who enjoys variety and will lead these 6 churches with 4 church schools, alongside the existing house for duty priest, into a new season of growth and flourishing as they serve a growing population.

Rev Katie Cross

Area Dean of Alcester Deanery

Who are we?

We are a group of six parishes based in beautiful rural south Warwickshire. The two largest churches are St Laurence's, Bidford-on-Avon, and St Matthew's, Salford Priors. Sunday services take place in these churches on a weekly basis. The other churches are smaller and services take place in each either once or twice per month. Full details of our current service pattern are set out on page 34. All of our churches are open to changes to this pattern and we do not expect our incumbent to take three communion services every Sunday!

God is doing exciting things in our benefice. In recent years we have implemented several new initiatives: Messy Church at both Bidford and Salford Priors; Muddy Church; Breathing Space (a monthly meditative service); Café Church in both Bidford and Salford Priors; the Explore Course (for those seeking or wanting to more deeply explore the Christian faith); a Community Pantry; Saplings playgroup. Each of those initiatives has brought new people into our fellowship and they continue to grow.

Across the group we have different traditions and some of our congregations have a more clergy-focused approach to ministry than the others. We have a strong cohort of lay leaders who help to run services in all of our churches. Additionally, we have one licensed Reader and six retired clergy living in the benefice who are all very supportive and willing to help taking some services and occasional offices. The benefice also employs an extremely capable part-time administrator who acts as the first point of contact for all enquiries, manages rotas and news sheets, and deals with a host of other responsibilities.

Our Associate Minister has special responsibility for St Matthew's, Salford Priors, as a part-time non stipendiary minister (House for Duty). St Matthew's also employs a Family Link Worker and has a Ministry Team which works in partnership with the Associate Minister and Family Link Worker to support their ministry.

Our name reflects our vision to be representing the heart of God to our communities here in the heart of England. We work well together to achieve that vision. All Churchwardens met together with the previous rector 4 times a year. We currently hold a group wide service approximately 3 times per year and members of our congregations work together in various initiatives such as *Open the Bible* and Messy Church.

Our parishes contain four Church of England primary schools (a total of more than 500 pupils). Two of these schools fall within Salford Priors parish and our Associate Minister and Family Link Worker take the lead in taking assemblies, facilitating visits to church and other initiatives for these two schools. Our other two schools are supported by our Reader who has maintained close contact during the interregnum. We also have a body of dedicated foundation governors. We have strong links with all four schools.

What do we offer to you?

- The opportunity to be part of the next exciting chapter for our benefice as we seek to represent the heart of God to our communities here in the Heart of England.
- The chance to join in with new initiatives – Messy Church, Muddy Church, Explore, Breathing Space, Café Church - where we are seeing growth and/or the opportunity for new initiatives where there is significant new housing such as in Bidford on Avon.
- Support from our Associate Minister, Family Link Worker and our administrator (photographed here).
- A willingness from each parish to be flexible around ways of working and service patterns.
- Dedicated teams in each parish enthusiastic about serving alongside you and praying for you to flourish in your ministry.
- A large, modern vicarage set in lovely gardens in the largest of our villages with a full range of amenities.
- Strong and supportive connections to schools and head teachers and a body of committed foundation governors.
- The opportunity to offer and to receive expertise across the Deanery.



Where would you live?

The vicarage is in Bidford on Avon. It is a four-bedroomed house with a single garage and a large garden, situated in a quiet service road parallel with the main Salford Road. The house was extended downstairs and reconfigured upstairs by the diocese in 2010. It has a large study with separate access from the front lobby, a refitted large kitchen/diner, utility room, downstairs toilet and 2 reception rooms. There is an en-suite master bedroom plus 3 further good-sized bedrooms and a family bathroom.



What are we like?

As individual churches, we are quite diverse in our styles of worship and we are comfortable with this variety, which we would like to retain. Some of us like the calm and familiarity of the Book of Common Prayer with traditional hymns, while others prefer more modern styles of worship, with the majority of our services drawn from Common Worship. We welcome everyone and we rejoice that our services have regular members who range in age from babies to very senior citizens.

We have a strong lay involvement in most areas of church life: leading services, including communion by extension where authorised; preaching; leading initiatives and home groups; and, taking administrative responsibilities.

We have four well supported Home Groups which meet regularly in homes across the benefice, studying scripture, praying and supporting one another. There is also a weekly prayer meeting held at St Matthew's.

We have good links with our communities. A community pantry operates in Salford Priors and we provide regular support to a number of families. We have been very involved with setting up and running a Refugee Resettlement scheme in the area called "Hearts & Homes" with one family from Syria now settled in their house in Bidford. We have welcomed several Ukrainian families staying with host members of our congregations or in other rented accommodation within the benefice and they continue to be supported.

There is an enthusiastic, ecumenical "Open the Bible" team which visits each of the 4 church schools once a month (sometimes with live props!) and occasionally uses local churches for their productions.

We offer baptism and marriage preparation, sometimes lay-led, and our members also carry out various pastoral duties, such as home visits, youth leading, coffee mornings etc. Our Associate Minister leads an "Explore" course on a twice-yearly basis.

All of our churches have paid their Parish Share and clergy's expenses in full. As a group we are comfortable with men or women priests.

Where is Jesus leading us?

We are a mission-focused group, committed to: knowing and loving Jesus more; growing in faith and knowledge of God; and, reaching out into our communities, offering support and friendship with a variety of initiatives and events. We see our four church schools as offering fantastic opportunities to reach young people and their families and we continue to build relationships with the schools and encourage them to come to our churches for special services and educational visits. We are excited by the growth that we have witnessed through new initiatives since the pandemic and hope that we can continue to nurture and expand that growth.

We are a collection of rural parishes populated by an enthusiastic team who bring a variety of gifts and callings. We work well together (and like one another!) but we recognise that we can change to work even more effectively together. We are looking for someone who can be our team captain, and who will develop and grow together with us as we jointly serve and worship God.

Our vision is to represent the heart of God to our communities in the Heart of England by worshipping God, making new disciples and transforming communities.

Our key priorities:

- To be growing as church congregations both numerically and in our personal faith and in our ability to share that faith.
- To be reaching out to children, young people and families with initiatives such as Messy Church, Muddy Church, and through positive engagement with our four church schools.
- For our churches to have a transforming presence in their communities, being visible and offering support where needed and encouraging our communities to participate and get involved, aiming to work alongside proactive local individuals or agencies where possible. For example, both of the larger villages have very active weekly 'warm hubs' run by the respective Parish Councils.
- To continue to nurture closer relationships between our six congregations.
- We have already simplified some our governance and are open to considering further ways to do so.

Personal qualities:

We want our churches to continue to have a welcoming ethos and we recognise the importance of the role of the incumbent in setting the tone for this welcome. Therefore we are praying for someone who:

- Shares our vision and will help us advance our key priorities
- Will help us grow in our personal faith and in confidence to share that faith
- Is cheerful, resilient, energetic and hopeful
- Can identify and encourage other people's gifts, work effectively with others and lead our team
- Is administratively competent with good delegation skills
- Can work with children and young people or can inspire others to do so
- Is willing to offer their specialist expertise and passion in a way that is collaborative and flexible.

Where are we?

We belong to Coventry Diocese, in the Archdeaconry of Warwick, and the Alcester Deanery.

We are ideally located with easy access to the rest of the country using the motorway network (Birmingham is about 45 minutes away, London and Manchester 2 hours).





You are invited to St Matthew's Church to

Explore the big questions

? ? ?

How do we know if there is a God?
 What might God be like?
 What would God think of us?
 What makes for a good life?

Tuesdays 7.30-9pm
 in the Church room beginning 28th February.

Contact Rev Sheila Bridge to sign up/
 for more info:
sheila.heartparishes@gmail.com

Appendix 1: The Six Churches

St Laurence's, Bidford on Avon

Bidford-on-Avon is a large semi-rural village in South Warwickshire on the river Avon and is situated half way between Stratford-upon-Avon and Evesham. The parish includes the smaller villages of Broom, Barton and Marlcliff. The population of Bidford-on-Avon at the 2021 census was 6370.

The parish is mostly residential with light industrial estates on the north-eastern boundary of the village. The B439 road from Stratford to Evesham by-passes the centre of the village. The “old” village contains the church, shops and most of the older residential properties many of which back onto the river. To the north of the B439 are more recent residential estates. The village contains most of the essential shops - Post Office within Co-op supermarket, “One Stop” mini supermarket, card shop, newsagents, pharmacy, hairdressers. There is also a dental practice, an optician, a solicitor, an estate agent, a petrol station/garage and car sales business, a funeral director, two cafés, two restaurants, two pubs in the village, as well as others in Broom and Barton, a fish and chip shop and two take-aways. A large health centre is located on the outskirts of the village. Larger shops and supermarkets can be found in Stratford and Evesham.



St Laurence's Church is situated in Church Street, in the heart of Bidford and is a Place of Worship grade II listed building, dating from the 1200's. The nave was enlarged in the 19th century. The building seats up to 200 people, with chairs, which enables flexibility for different services. Toilets and a servery area were added in 2019. We have a large church hall which is situated on the other side of Church Street opposite the church. This used to be the school and is regularly used by church and village organisations. It consists of a hall, kitchen, and toilets. The hall is hired out for parties and other occasional events. Management of the church hall and adjoining cottage is the responsibility of the Bidford Church Cottage Trust (Trustees: Rector and Churchwardens). The cottage is currently for sale.

Our Electoral Roll consists of 59 people of whom 3 live outside the Parish. The approximate social mix of our congregation is 70% above age 70 (most of whom have retired), 19% aged 40-69, 6% aged 18-39, and 4% children (0-10).

On the first Sunday of the month, the 10.30am morning service is Café Church, which provides a relaxed atmosphere with tea/coffee and cakes, with the aim of attracting more people, especially families. On the second, third and fourth Sundays in the month, the 10.00am service is Common Worship Eucharist, which is robed. Occasionally, baptisms are included in the Sunday service. On fifth Sundays, there is usually a Group morning service, held in various churches in the Group.

We have an enthusiastic team of bellringers who ring prior to the Sunday services and for Weddings as requested. There is a weekly practice apart from one evening in the month when help is given to Salford Priors ringers.



There is a small Mothers' Union Friendship group, which meets once a month.

In September 2023 we started Messy Church on a Saturday afternoon which has become well established and attracts many families.

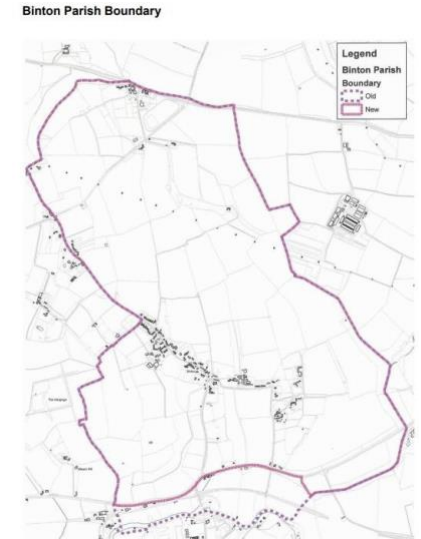
We hold a Christmas Tree Festival in the church each year with trees decorated and entered by many local businesses and organisations. It is open to the public for a small charge over one weekend in December and is very popular with the local community. As well as bringing the village community together, the event provides a good source of income each year.

Waterloo House Care Home is visited occasionally by our clergy and Reader, holding small services and offering Holy Communion from time to time.

Bidford is a vibrant community, that has grown significantly in the last few years, and is likely to grow even more, giving us a huge mission opportunity and challenge, that needs creative leadership.

St Peter's, Binton

Binton Village (which had four entries in the Domesday book of 1086) is five miles from Stratford, with approximately 375 residents whose homes vary from thatched cottages to modern farm building conversions and from the Old Rectory, to social housing. Three quarters of the residents live in one family households, 85% of the homes are detached or semi-detached; 15% of homes are rented properties. Part of the village is in a conservation area and there is very limited new building allowed. Our social mix is of families moving out of towns and commuting to work, an increasing proportion of people who work mainly from or at home, and a large proportion of retired people.



There are several registered small businesses; one pub/restaurant (an old coaching inn); a village hall which hosts parties, meetings, exhibitions, pop-up coffee mornings, sales of various types; Binton Social Club with lots of activities including darts, shooting, birdwatching, bonfire nights, Jubilee events etc. We have a defibrillator, a visiting mobile library, a Book Club and a lively community WhatsApp group.

The local Parish Council is dynamic. There are many excellent walks on well-maintained footpaths. The Heart of England Forest has recently acquired many acres of land and planted them with new woodland trees. Residents new to the village are provided with a welcome hamper and information on local facilities and events.



The current St Peter's Church was built in 1875 and has views south over the River Avon, Warwickshire and the Cotswolds. There has been a church on the site since at least 1286 and some signs of the original church remain. The main feature of our church is a memorial window by Kempe, dedicated to Captain Scott and his co-explorers who died in their failed attempt to return from the South Pole. The window shows four scenes of the 1912 expedition. Scott had married Kathleen Bruce, sister of the Reverend Lloyd Harvey Bruce, Binton's rector from 1906-24.

Currently there is a Family Service at 10.30 on the second Sunday each month, plus a Holy Communion Service on rotation with the other small Parish Churches. Congregations number between 10 and 20. Festival services frequently include musical contributions from our younger members and the Easter Day, Harvest, Carol and Nativity Services are well attended.

We open the church every day for local worshippers and for visitors, many of whom come to see the Scott memorial window and the accompanying exhibition about those who perished on their expedition. Unfortunately we do not have any water or kitchen facilities. A site toilet, outside, is unlocked during Services.

Our congregation includes retirees, farmers, council workers, teachers, gardeners and business people. We have a pipe organ for services and the use of a P A system when required.



St Giles, Exhall

Stones and lime mortar...

St Giles church is a grade 2 listed building. It is 900 years old and was dedicated by Simon, Bishop of Worcester in 1125. It has a 12th Century nave and a 13th Century chancel. Much of the church was restored and partly rebuilt in 1862 at a cost to the then rector (please do not let this put you off!) The interior is beautifully presented after a recent restoration. It has many interesting features including brass effigies and a Norman studded door. Although picture postcard, it's not very versatile in terms of modern worship with fixed wooden pews and no toilet or catering facilities. Having said that, we do attract a range of worshippers, including children, who have a designated area for crafts and activities. St Giles' clock face and mechanism, which is well over 100 years old has also recently been restored.



The Heart of the community....

The Parish of Exhall lies within Stratford-on-Avon District Council. It was referred to as 'Dodging' Exhall by a certain Mr Shakespeare, referring to the difficulty in trying to locate the village; the local cricket team also make reference to this fact, calling themselves the 'Dodgers', nothing to do with their age of course! There are 51 residences in Exhall with a population of 143, many of whom are retired couples but there are also several younger families with children who reside in the village too. The village is rural, and surrounded by farmed land. It enjoys a strong community spirit, and has a WhatsApp group, a vibrant village hall committee, shared suppers, monthly cinema, and lots of activities that bring people together. We also have a monthly coffee morning and library.



St Giles certainly plays a significant role in the community; it lies at the heart of the village and attracts a congregation of around 20 for our main monthly Village Praise family service. We also have Holy communion and Evensong services. We are very friendly and welcoming and it's lovely to have children and families in the church. We like to make our worship meaningful and heartfelt but relaxed and informal. We serve refreshments afterwards and have a handsome collection of biscuits, 'Jammie Dodger's' (no reference to the Bard) being a firm favourite with children.

We also have a number of special services including Harvest, Remembrance, and a Carol and Christmas day service. These services are well attended, and it is lovely to see the church full.

Of course, not everyone in the village has a Christian faith, but overall, the church is supported and cherished by the village. We have relied up on the generosity of residents on a number of occasions to raise funds for restoration projects. We have a mowing rota consisting of several gentleman in the village who give their time to mow and strim the churchyard.

The village holds its Children's Easter egg hunt in the church grounds and St Giles always plays a part in the annual fete, whether it's cream teas, singing, or treasure hunts, the church is ever present.

Accessibility is important to us and the church is always open.

In addition to our Parish Share we have raised funds for Save the Children and Acorns Children's hospice for almost two decades. We also co-ordinate Armistice poppy fundraising in the village.

Harvest Festival



It's a wedding!



Getting ready for Carols



St Matthew's, Salford Priors

Salford Priors is a rural village set within sight of the beautiful Cotswold Hills. With a population of approximately 1,700 inhabitants, the parish of Salford Priors, which incorporates the hamlets of Abbot's Salford, Dunnington, Iron Cross, Pitchill, Rushford and the Bevingtons, is the largest parish (by area) in Warwickshire and dates back to before the 10th century.

Local industry is mainly agricultural, although we also have a machinery manufacturer and a sand & gravel company. The village also caters for tourists with some B&Bs, a few pubs, a hotel and some caravan parks. Despite appearing to be an affluent area, we were identified by the diocese in 2004 as being the most deprived parish in the deanery.

The village has a modern, well used Memorial Hall at the opposite end of the village from the church where several clubs and societies meet regularly. The population is made up of retired

people as well as professionals with families, but we also have people in the middle to lower income groups with a number of single parent families reliant on benefits and the Community Pantry.

St Matthew's Church was built by the Normans and is mentioned in the Domesday book. Their influence can be seen above the main door with a typical (and magnificently) carved stone arch with different patterns. It is protected by a Victorian porch with wrought iron gate which was put there to keep out the sheep! The church has an unusual semi octagonal tower which may have been a beacon tower to guide travellers across the (often) flooded meadows. Every Good Friday we climb the tower (Health and Safety notwithstanding) to look across the surrounding countryside.





The church can seat about 170 people in total with its traditional pews in the nave and chairs in the south aisle. The south aisle is very adaptable and can be used for social events. We have a Church Room at the back of the church with a kitchen and servery area. Two new toilets were installed in the church last year freeing up the old outside toilet block for much needed storage.

All the liturgy, readings and songs are usually projected onto 2 large screens, one on each side of the church. The Ministry Team assist the Associate Minister to plan and deliver most of the services and they meet together to pray and discuss business regularly. Most of our services have lay people reading lessons, leading prayers and assisting at communion. We have a lively ministry of bell ringing for worship and weddings with regular practice sessions and training opportunities for new ringers. Our service leaders do not usually wear robes for family services, but a cassock alb and stole is normally worn for communion services and baptisms. Once or twice each month our worship is led by live musicians and singers, with a mixture of modern and more traditional worship songs. Hymns are sung too, although mainly to recorded backing tracks. We do not have a regular organist although there are organists we can call on for funerals and weddings.

Our Family Link Worker and a team of helpers organise activities for children during most services. She also organises Muddy Church on one Sunday a month in the churchyard which runs concurrently with the communion service in church. There is also a group for older, secondary school children called "SPYING". In addition we have two family services each month, one of which takes a café church format. There is a weekly "Saplings" Mothers and Toddlers group on Monday mornings during term time in the Church Room or outside in the churchyard, which is very popular and frequently oversubscribed. A weekly community pantry provides support to those who need it in the village.

We have good links with the local uniformed organisations who attend for Remembrance Day and some festivals. Our Associate Minister and Family Link Worker regularly lead assemblies in the two CofE schools in the parish (Salford Priors and Dunnington) and the 'Open the Bible' team also visit regularly. The Associate Minister visits Salford House Residential Home opposite the church with communion for those residents who wish to partake and "Saplings" also visit the care home from time to time as the residents love to see and interact with the children.



Prayer is very important to us, so we keep our church open during the day and have a "Prayer Space" in the choir stalls with a box to leave prayer requests. We also hold a weekly prayer meeting open to the whole benefice.

As well as the monthly notice sheet produced and issued to all the churches which has a diary of the week's events, news items and topics for prayer, there is an up-to-date website and a Facebook page for St Matthew's. These are all useful in keeping the local community and congregation aware of all that is happening at St Matthew's and our minister records a weekly prayer video which is published on the village Facebook page.



Since Spring 2023 our Associate Minister has run a four week Explore course each term. Take up has been good and has led to an adult baptism and confirmation service in June 2023.

Our Family Link worker Sarah organises several events for families over the summer school holidays which include things like bell boating on the river, dance workshops, pottery and animal encounters. These are open to children from the church, village and the schools. We hold an annual Family Fun Day in the churchyard around the time of St Matthew's Day in September, when we invite the whole community to come to enjoy games and activities plus a barbeque and Teddy Bear Zip wire challenge! This has always been very popular and attracts well over 200 people each year.

We were blessed by the sale of a property which was left to us in 1962 and the money has funded various capital building works both at the church and also in the two schools. This capital gives some security for the ongoing maintenance of our Grade 1 listed building which has been kept in exceptionally good repair.

Our funds also help employ our part time Family Link Worker (FLW), but we are aware that this is a finite resource so our finances and giving are kept under constant review. We installed a Digital Collection Plate system last year which is available at the back of the nave at all times and has been an excellent source of extra income particularly from visitors.

Muddy Church shelter challenge



Family Fun Day



St Andrew's, Temple Grafton

Our parish includes the villages of Temple Grafton, Ardens Grafton and Blackcliffe. There has been a church in Temple Grafton since Saxon times, but our current (Grade 2 listed) building was constructed in 1875.

There are around 475 people living in the parish, and our church roll is 5. We have an excellent, well-maintained organ, although we currently have no regular organist for services. We can seat around 180 people in the church which means the church is full whenever we hold services for our village school. Our churchyard is maintained by a faithful crew of volunteers. The church is currently on the at risk register and our heating is unusable as the boiler chimney has been removed for safety reasons and the large cast iron heating pipes leak. The spire is in need of repair with an estimated cost of £250,000, none of which we can afford to fund at present. The hope for this church building may lie with financial support from outside agencies. The Diocesan team are aware of the challenges being faced here and are available for advice and consultation. Although several churches in this area claim to be where Shakespeare got married, the claim is particularly well substantiated here.



In terms of ministry to the village, St Andrew's has close links with our CofE primary school, which is located directly opposite the church the school collaborates with the church for Mothering Sunday and Christingle services, both of which are well attended. Our Reader takes collective worship in school monthly and the "Open the Bible" team visits monthly as well. The school also their own services in the church at Harvest and at the end of each term.



Our village population is predominantly white middle-class with two Travellers' sites. We have a village hall which is used for various local clubs and societies. There are weekly coffee mornings and games evenings as well as regular Country Fair. Temple Grafton cricket club play every week in an idyllic setting in the grounds of the old Grafton Manor, followed by drinks at one of our two local pubs. There is an active Women's Institute in the village.

We presently have one monthly early Communion service and 4 Evensongs a year. We do have services at Christmas, Easter and Remembrance (shared alternately with Binton) and our Harvest Evensong is usually well attended.

St Andrew's is a congregation which has shrunk more since Covid and the lack of heating. We faithfully hope for the revival of the Family Service and an increase in our congregation if all the emergency repairs can be completed.



St Milburga's, Wixford

The small village of Wixford lies between the large village of Bidford on Avon and the market town of Alcester with the river Arrow running through it. There are 63 properties here, ranging from Tudor Cottages through to modern houses. There are about 100 adults and 12 children currently living here. These range from young couples with children through to retired people, and there is an approximate 60/40 split with the majority being retired. We also have two permanent static home sites at either end of the village, with one being holiday homes and the other mainly being permanent residents. The holiday home site belongs to The Fish public house. The other public house, The Three Horseshoes offers a bar and restaurant. We also have a new village hall.



Gorse Horse House

St Milburga's, our village church, is in fact a chapel of ease, with the mother church being St Giles across the fields in the next village of Exhall. This is also reflected in the current PCC and churchwardens from the two villages operating together. In times past the vicar lived at Exhall and rode his horse here to preach. Whilst here, the horse was stabled in a rare gorse horse house, one of only two in Warwickshire, and this remains in our churchyard.

There has been some form of worship of the site since 1086 and the earliest parts of the church date back to the 12th century. The church's only utility is electricity, but the building is in good order and well maintained as is the churchyard.

We have a monthly Holy Communion and, from May to October a monthly Compline. The Holy Communion is mainly supported by three village families and a handful of worshippers from Exhall and Temple Grafton. The Compline is better supported with worshippers from across the benefice. We would like to nurture this cross-benefice interaction, and continue to encourage others to join us. Advent and Christmas are the main services that are well supported by the villagers. These special Festivals are well publicised with every villager having a personal invitation as well as being announced on social media.

It's our hope to build on these well attended services to reach out into the hearts of our occasional worshippers from our village and encourage them to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and become part of a thriving church community.



Appendix 2: The Four Church Schools



'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full' John 10:10. By sowing the seeds of curiosity, creativity, compassion, faith, hope and courage, pupils flourish as valued members of the world community, as educated citizens and as part of God's creation: *'With God all things are possible' Matthew 19:26.*

Our school was inspected by **Ofsted** in January 2020 and we continue to be judged a **good** school. Our vision promotes pupils' well-being and inclusion and is a place where pupils flourish intellectually, emotionally and spiritually. Their journey through the school supports them in finding their own voice, purpose, potential and individuality.

We took part in a **SIAMS** inspection in June 2024 and received a very positive J1 Judgement. The Inspector reported that "Pupils cherish calm and peaceful opportunities for reflection and prayer enhancing their spiritual growth."

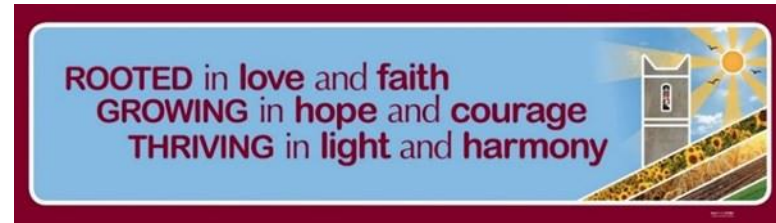
In September 2024 we welcomed a very experienced new, dynamic Headmaster who is building well on the foundations of the outgoing Head who had been in post for many years.

We are a school with entry places at age five for 45 children each year, and they leave us to go to a variety of local schools at age eleven. Children come from Bidford and local villages. A growing number of the pupils (and some of their parents) attend the monthly Messy Church in St Laurence.

Our Religious Education teaching is based on the Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education and an act of collective worship takes place in school each day. We are supported by St Laurence's Church and other religious groups from the local community.



Salford Priors CofE Academy



At Salford Priors Church of England Academy, we want our children to know that our school is a special place where we can all feel welcome, safe, supported, valued and respected. We pride ourselves on being at the heart of Salford Priors community and village, enjoying close links with our local families, neighbours, businesses, church and parish council. Our vision statement banner is above.

Our school vision has been formulated in consultation with all stakeholders and is strongly based on Biblical scripture, in particular Ephesians 3:17-19 and this vision sits alongside our Diocese of Coventry Multi Academy Trust's vision, based on John 10:10: '*Together, pursuing life in all its fullness*'.



We are a small, rural village school, set amidst beautiful countryside, with 15 entry places per year. We enjoy a nurturing and inclusive culture, where everyone cares for each other as part of our 'school family'. We aim to create a happy, safe and inclusive environment where everyone can feel valued and where we enable our pupils to flourish as accomplished, confident and caring learners. Our pupils love learning outdoors, surrounded by fields and trees, taking part in regular sporting activities and Forest School sessions, enabling the children to learn more about nature, how to look after the environment and how to work effectively within a team. We also offer a wide range of extra-curricular after-school sports clubs and music lessons.

We enjoy a very strong relationship with St. Matthew's Church, including regular visits and services. The Reverend Sheila Bridge and the Ministry Team support us by leading weekly collective worship, as well as a weekly lunchtime club. In addition, *Open the Bible* visit us monthly to perform wonderful, interactive Bible Stories and music.

Our SIAMS inspection in February 2018 rated us as 'Good' in all aspects. Our Ofsted inspection in May 2022 acknowledged the positive impact of being part of the Trust and having good leadership, resulting in notable school improvement across several areas and moving up a whole grade from Inadequate (pre-academy) to Requires Improvement. We have now achieved this as our Ofsted inspection in October 2024 rated us 'Good'. Our Headteacher, Mrs Helen Bowen took up her post at the start of the summer term of 2024.

Dunnington C of E (VA) Primary School



Dunnington Primary School is a Voluntary Aided church of England school within the parish of Salford Priors. Our vision statement is 'We care, we believe, we succeed', which is supported by 1 Thessalonians 5:11 'encourage one another and build each other up'. The site is in the rural village of Dunnington set within beautiful grounds giving all pupils extensive opportunities to engage with the outdoor environment. The school has four dedicated class teachers supported by the interim Head Teacher Monica Gamble. A number of support staff and teaching assistants aid in the smooth running of the school. As a VA school we have 5 foundation governors all of whom have been approved and recommended by St Matthew's PCC.

The pupil numbers are about 100 most years with a single form entry of 15. Each class is a mixed year group with the exception of reception who have their own dedicated classroom and outdoor space for learning.

The school's recent OFSTED inspection (Feb '23) rated us as good and we aspire to be outstanding with the next inspection expected within the next 12 months. Our SIAMs inspection is expected to be in the academic year of 2024/5.

Our RE and Collective Worship follows Imaginor's 'Roots and Fruits' and we have regular input from Revd Sheila Bridge and Mrs Sarah Folkes as well as the Open the Bible Team. Mrs Folkes leads a weekly 'Leading Learners Lunch Club' as well as leading Collective worship. This year we will be attending services in church at Christmas and Easter. The geographical distance between school and church prevent more regular visits.

The school aims to provide a happy and stimulating environment where children become confident and happy members of our community. There are high standards of attainment and behaviour set in order that everyone is able to develop to their full potential. We would welcome closer links with the Ministry Team and clergy in the future, building on the current foundations we have.





Temple Grafton Church of England Primary

“Together we shine” is our school’s vision statement and is based upon the Gospel of St Matthew 5:16; our belief is that by working together we can shine in all that the school does.

We are a small village school with 108 presently on the role and 15 entry places available each year. Children are taught in classes of two year groups. Although a church school, TG recognises the importance of giving all children the opportunity to learn about and respect the diversity, opinions and beliefs of others.

TG maintains high aspirations for all our children through a spirit of dedication and collaboration. This commitment to building a love of learning is firmly underpinned by the hope, wisdom, compassion and dignity embodied in our Christian values of nurture, respect, collaboration and inspiration.

TG is part of the Arden Forest C of E Multi Academy Trust whose vision is ‘inspiring educational excellence for everyone’. We had a **SIAMS** inspection in November 2016 which rated us as good in our distinctiveness and effectiveness as a C of E school, in meeting the needs of all learners, in leadership and management of the school and regarding the impact of our collective worship. **OFSTED** in December 2011 rated us an outstanding school providing pupils with an excellent education mainly due to the commitment of all staff in treating every child as an individual.

Our R. E. and collective worship follows Warwickshire SACRE provisions giving opportunities to explore both the Christian tradition and the beliefs and practices of other faiths. We are supported by St Andrew’s Church and other community religious groups such as the Open The Bible team.

We hope the person appointed as Rector in the Benefice would be able to lead occasional whole school worship events, and they would be very welcome in our school.

Appendix 3: Other information

Monthly Service Pattern — Sunday Worship

Village	1st Sunday	2nd Sunday	3rd Sunday	4th Sunday	5th Sunday
Bidford	10.30am Café Church	10am Holy Communion	10am Holy Communion	10am Holy Communion	
Binton		10.30am Family Service			8am Holy Communion
Exhall			8am Holy Communion	11am Village Praise	10.30am Group Family Service in one of the churches
Salford Priors	8.45am Holy Communion 10.30am Family Service	10.30am Holy Communion + Muddy Church + SPYING	10.30am Café Church Family Service 5pm Breathing Space	10.30am Holy Communion	
Temple Grafton		8am Holy Communion			
Wixford				8am Holy Communion 6.30pm Compline (during summer)	

Midweek Events and Activities

Village	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Bidford		7.30pm Bellringing Practice		2.30pm Mothers Union (monthly)		2.00pm Messy Church (Monthly)
Binton						
Exhall						
Salford Priors	10.15am "Saplings" Mother/Carer & Toddlers Group (Term time)	10am Prayer meeting 7.30pm Bellringing Practice (Monthly)	Morning Community Pantry			
Temple Grafton						
Wixford						

Occasional Offices (2022 or 2023)

Village	Baptisms	Weddings	Funerals
Bidford	6	4	13
Binton	0	2	0
Exhall	0	0	2
Salford Priors	15	5	14
Temple Grafton	2	1	2
Wixford	0	0	1

Attendance

Village	Early Communions	Main Service	Evenings	Electoral Roll
Bidford	-	34	-	59
Binton	13	21	-	17
Exhall	8	22	-	18
Salford Priors	12	50	14	54
Temple Grafton	7	(26)	-	5
Wixford	10	-	12	3

Finances (2023)

Village	Income	Expenditure	Unrestricted Reserves	Restricted Reserves	Notes
Bidford	£47,614	£63,847	£18,694	£21,074	Expenditure includes large one-off repair to church tower (£35,000)
Binton	£5,820	£5,249	£4,029	£51,306	
Exhall*	£15,969	£13,872	£3,703	£5,196	
Salford Priors	£61,483	£118,858	£132,621	£9,815	Expenditure includes large one-off expenditure on building project (£55,000).
Temple Grafton*	£6,448	£11,013	£8,397		Expenditure includes some major
Wixford	£4,148	£4,954	£9,996	£8,652	

* 2022 figures