



St Paul's, Stockingford
Loving God, Loving the 'Ford

Parish Profile

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The Right Reverend Sophie Jolley, Bishop of Coventry

As the new Bishop of Coventry, I am delighted that you are considering the possibility that God may be calling you to St Paul's, Stockingford. It is a challenging time to be a church leader in the Church of England and here in Coventry we are committed to helping clergy to flourish and grow in their vocation, to know themselves loved and called by God and to find that they are valued by the bishop, the senior team and their colleagues both lay and ordained.

We seek clergy who find their joy in the good news of Jesus Christ and are passionate to share that joy with others. St Paul's Stockingford is a lively community with a rich history and a real heart to reach the people of their community with God's love. Like many churches they want to find new ways to support the growth of the church among all ages and have a particular sense that nurturing children, young people and families will be key in this. Of course, we are deeply grateful for the faithful ministry of older people in our communities too and there is a very committed team at St Paul's who will want to welcome and work with you going forward.

Coventry also has a special calling to be a place and people of reconciliation. Our world is far from peaceful, and God calls us to be peacemakers, so if this is something you feel drawn towards then Coventry Diocese may well be the place for you. Everyone has a part to play in this, and we are excited about the shape of this in the years ahead.

Please be assured of my prayers as you discern your future.

The Right Reverend Sophie Jolley
Bishop of Coventry

The Reverend Alison Evans, Assistant Area Dean

Thank you for taking the time to prayerfully consider whether this is the post for you. May God speak with you as you read this profile and listen to his voice.

This is a church who are keen to bless their community. Stockingford is a deprived parish with great needs, and the next incumbent has a key role to bring fresh energy to the church's outreach and its work in the community, to bring wholeness and healing as they share the Good News of Jesus' love and his call to discipleship.

Nuneaton Deanery has one of the largest populations in the Church of England. It is also one of the poorest areas of Coventry Diocese, with large areas of deprivation. The Deanery Chapter has a mixture of stipendiary, self-supporting and retired clergy, from a wide range of traditions. We encourage each other by meeting for prayer and discussion, and sharing lunch together, taking turns to host our colleagues. We have an interesting mix of rural and suburban churches and we endeavour to support each other as much as we can.

A recent initiative of the Diocese of Coventry has been to establish six Diocesan Mission Hub Churches. The Hubs seek to support and resource leaders and churches in the development of discipleship, growing leaders and planting new worshipping communities, with a particular focus on the regeneration of urban parishes. All Saints Bedworth is the nearest and is keen to support. The deanery is strategically looking at opportunities for growth. We think that this parish has the potential for considerable growth and are excited about this appointment.

We pray that as you read the profile, you may be inspired to be the priest to help this church to grow and to bring new life and growth. We look forward to welcoming you to Nuneaton Deanery! With my prayers for you as you listen to God, reflect and pray.

Rev Alison Evans
Assistant Area Dean



About our Church

“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” Matthew 23:36-40

Hello and welcome to St. Paul’s Church and Parish Centre in Stockingford, part of the Nuneaton deanery in North Warwickshire.

Welcoming is important to us.

We, as a worshipping congregation, are committed to sharing and spreading God’s love in our local community and beyond...so we set out to welcome all, everyone, to be a friendly, supportive, inclusive parish church. We want everyone who enters our church to feel welcome, valued and loved.

We have a motto, ‘Love God, Love the ‘Ford’, grounded in Jesus’ teachings from the Gospel passage above. We set out to do this by developing and deepening our own faith through shared worship, prayer, bible study and discussion, then going out into the community offering support and involvement with events and projects.

We are a generous congregation. We support fundraising appeals for local, national and international charities. We offer our talents, our wealth and our time to our church and to our community. Everything we do, as a church, is led by prayer, inspired by the love of God and Christ’s commandment to love one another.

For a glimpse of what we get up to click [here](#).

Our previous incumbent, after ten years as our vicar, has taken up a new full-time role at Coventry Cathedral. We are looking for someone to continue to develop and grow a strong, caring, inclusive and inspiring worshipping community, and increase our outward vision to support and serve the wider local community; someone with imagination and enthusiasm to explore new ways of connecting with some of the harder to reach parts of the parish, someone who will help us to welcome and invite more younger people to find faith in Jesus.





Our hopes and prayers

Having recently celebrated the 200th birthday of the church in 2024, and reflecting on everything that God has done in our parish over the past two centuries, we are now searching for a vicar to lead us into our third century of faith and action.

We are known as a church that makes people feel welcome, but we want to explore how we can harness that welcome to encourage and enable people to discover, develop and deepen their faith.

St Paul's has an active and fiercely loyal but aging congregation. To safeguard our future, we need to attract new worshippers and younger worshippers. We would also like to focus on attracting families, young adults and people who are new to faith. We need to understand the needs of newcomers to church and react to the recent increase in interest in God and Christianity.

One challenge will be to accommodate new forms of worship and still be respectful and meet the worship needs of our older regular congregation, many of whom have been attending the church for many decades.

We would like to develop new worship communities in our parish and explore new ways of church for people who may be too nervous to make the first step of coming into St Paul's, or who do not feel that the Sunday morning service meets their needs.

We are good at serving our community with good works. We would very much like to explore sharing the word of God more proactively in our community. We want to show our community that we are there for them as good neighbours both in words and deeds, and share our faith as the driving force behind our actions.

Our previous vicar made the decision to offer prayers of Love and Faith for LGBTQ+ couples, after extensive discussion with the congregation and with full support of the PCC. We would support a future incumbent to make this a reality.

This vision for the future of St Paul's was developed with our congregation, growing faith worker, the parish schools and youth group. As part of this process, we asked the congregation for three words that reflect their hopes and prayers for the future, which can be seen in the adjacent word cloud.

Person specification

St Paul's is looking for a new incumbent who is both progressive and is passionate in sharing the Good News of Jesus, someone who can help us share God's word in our parish. We are looking for a dynamic energetic vicar to inspire us in our faith and help us to reach out to all those who live and work in our parish with the love of Jesus.

Are you...

- Passionate about sharing the word of God in our church and community.
- Someone with a deep heartfelt prayerful faith that is the cornerstone of your ministry.
- Able to help us sow God's seeds, reap the harvest and keep the harvest growing.
- A leader who values diversity and encourages everyone to take a full part in the life of the church, including celebrating life events.
- Patient, caring, creative and resilient.
- Able to inspire and empower the ministry of every member of our worshipping community.
- Someone who can encourage our existing congregation while also making faith accessible to those who may not yet see church as relevant in their lives, and explore with us new ways of worshipping whilst honouring the traditional.
- Willing to work collaboratively and support strong teams.
- An excellent communicator who can excel at developing and maintaining relationships in our church, parish, town, deanery and diocese.
- Willing to be a presence in the wider community, especially reaching out to those not yet involved with the Church.
- Someone with a good sense of humour who likes cake! (gluten free or low sugar available!).

In dreaming big and trusting God, this profile mentions many areas where we need help. Are you the person who can do some of these things for the next season of life at St Paul's?



Loving God...

At St Paul's we have a range of services, faith-based groups and social groups. Our main weekly communion service is held on Sunday morning at 10am, but we also have a loyal and dedicated congregation for said communion at 8am on Sunday and at the morning communion service on Wednesday. The 8am Sunday service is live-streamed on Facebook, and regularly receives hundreds of views during the week.

We have ambitions to extend outreach into the Grove Farm area, seeding a new worshipping community and becoming a consistent presence, transforming our relationship with this community.

Our Music Group sings regularly at services, led by our musical director Andrea who also plays the electric organ and keyboard, which is very much appreciated by the congregation.

Other services include 'Mini Messy', a short and fun service for children and their parents/carers which includes action songs, a bible story and crafts (and cake!), held twice a month in term time. We also have full 'Messy Church' services at Christmas and Easter with a full range of crafts, Bible story and snacks. These are well attended and valued by families.

Twice a month there is an evening group called 'Ponderings and Prayers' which allows people to come together to explore, discuss and reflect on the Bible passages used in the communion service that week.

A monthly Lunch Club is run, offering lunch and a time of friendship and fellowship for older members of the community. This includes a short communion service, which is very important to those who attend who may not be able to attend the weekly communion services in church.



The church seasons are important to us at St Paul's. During Lent we have weekly small groups who follow a short course of study, discussion, prayer and fellowship, then nightly meditation services during Holy Week, a shared meal on Maundy Thursday followed by the stripping of the altar and vigil, and an hour at the cross on Good Friday. Easter is a joyous occasion, with a dawn service (followed by breakfast), and a family celebration at 10am, which usually includes an egg hunt, champagne and party poppers or confetti canons!

Over Advent and Christmas we offer weekly advent meditations, a carol service, and a festival for the congregation and local community groups to get involved in – over recent years this has included a Christmas Tree festival and a Nativity scene festival. The Christingle service is well attended with support from the local schools, and we hold a 'Quiet Christmas' service for those who may find the festive season difficult.

Another annual event is our summer Holiday Club, held near the end of the school summer holidays, offering fun, songs, games and fellowship for children based on a Christian message, story or theme.

We like to have fun and hold regular social events which usually include plenty of food and wine!

Regular services

St Paul's has been called a 'eucharistic' church. Holy communion plays a very important part in our worship. Usually, the worship follows this pattern:

- A weekly spoken communion service at 8am on a Sunday.
- A weekly communion service with hymns at 10am on a Sunday
- A weekly spoken communion service at 10am on a Wednesday.

Baptisms are normally on the first Sunday of the month at separate services starting at 12noon and 1pm (depending on need). Weddings are carried out on Saturdays (exceptions have been made). Funerals are carried out during the week to accommodate local funeral directors, the crematorium and the wishes of the deceased's family. Weddings, baptisms and funerals are booked through the parish office.

There is a short communion service before Lunch Club at 11:30am on the first Tuesday of each month. A Mini-Messy service takes place on the 2nd and 4th Sundays at 4pm.



Loving the Ford...

At St Paul's we greatly value our links with the local community, and try to show God's love through our actions and in loving our neighbours. We would like to develop our links with the community outside of our church buildings, meeting people where they are, and becoming better at sharing our faith as the driving force behind our acts.

The church is a venue for the local Trussell Trust foodbank twice a week, and we have set up a small 'micro-grant' project called 'Love the 'Ford'. Funded by the PCC and personal donations, this provides essential items to those in need in our parish. At Christmas time, we arrange Christmas goodie bags to be delivered to families in the parish who have been identified by the school pastoral teams as needing support, funded by local businesses.

Our Pastoral Caregroup is a very dedicated group providing contact and support to those in the community who are ill, cannot attend church for any reason, or who have recently been bereaved. They also arrange cards of welcome for families who come for baptism and a prayer list both for emergency prayers and longer-term prayer needs, as well as flowers and cards to celebrate joyful milestones such as birthdays and anniversaries.

Our Friday Coffee Mornings are popular with the local community as an opportunity to have a chat and meet new people.

The Parish Centre and Church Hall are available for groups to hire throughout the week, with current sessions including uniformed organisations (Brownies and Guides), a ladies group, film group, and as a rehearsal space for the local dramatics group, Masqueraders.

During term time a group of volunteers runs a 'Stay and Play' session each week for pre-school children and their parents and carers.

We hold a Summer Gala and Christmas Bazaar, which are very popular community events, and raise funds for the work of the church.

We also support the wider global community, fundraising during Christian Aid week, at Harvest and Christmas, and we are a fair trade church with a permanent fair-trade stall with fairly traded household goods, consumables and gifts available to purchase.





"There is a great community that feels like family, where everyone is welcoming and kind, the closeness within the church is inspiring, and what I love about SPOGs is how the staff listen to our ideas and respect us all. A church full of peace and new adventures, a safe space for young people to be themselves and discover who they are, with Sunday evenings that are fun and full of amazing, adventurous friends." SPOG



St Paul's Cof E Primary School visit St Paul's
Image credit: St Paul's Cof E Primary School

Children, young people and links with schools

We currently employ a part-time Growing Faith Worker in a temporary role (for the next 2 years), and are keen to explore any possible avenues to make this a long-term post. Our Growing Faith Worker writes:

"As the Growing Faith Project Worker my role is to grow faith in children, young people and families in the context of local church utilising the strong relationships the church has with its schools and voluntary organisations. I believe my primary responsibility is to share God's love with all the children, young people, and families I encounter, as well as with the adults who support them in schools and other organisations. I serve as the link between families, schools, and the church, demonstrating and sharing God's love and faith with them."

"I have established and nurtured positive relationships with our local primary and nursery schools, including their pastoral teams and their RE leads. I have delivered school assemblies and support the whole-school and year-group worship. The sessions we run for the schools have been welcomed and have received positive feedback both by pupils, parents/carers and school staff. Schools have seen a positive change in pupils after attending these sessions. These sessions include a young carer's group, 'shooting stars' building confidence group, and an Easter Experience session for the schools in church."

"Within the church, I lead the Mini Messy services twice a month during term time, and on alternate Sundays I run 'Sunday Squad' during the main 10am communion service."

We have a positive relationship with the three primary schools in our parish. St Paul's Church of England Primary School is the church school (voluntary controlled) and the incumbent is a member of the governing body for the school, along with two further foundation governors nominated by the PCC.



Children, young people and links with schools

Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, "children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation." Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky.
Philippians 2:14-15

The Headteacher at St Paul's school and the pupils worked together to develop this vision of what they hope our new vicar will be:

"As we welcome a new vicar to join our community, it is important that they are able to build strong and meaningful relationships with the staff, pupils, and families within our school. Being present and engaged in school life, with a good sense of fun, helps foster a warm and supportive environment where everyone feels valued and connected.

"A key part of this role is to continue strengthening the relationship between our school and St Paul's Church. The vicar will help us to understand our place in the world and nurture our relationships—with ourselves, with God, with each other, and with the wider community around us. It is essential that they uphold and demonstrate the school's Christian values of love, trust, respect, friendship, courage, and kindness in everything they do.

"Our school vision—to "Shine like stars in the world" (Philippians 2:14–15)—guides our aspirations, and the new vicar will help us live out this vision by being a spiritual guide and role model. Their ongoing prayers for the school community will be a source of strength and encouragement, helping us all to grow in faith and love."

We would like to increase links with the secondary school in our parish, Nuneaton Academy.

For young people at secondary school age, we have a long-running and close-knit youth group called SPOGs (St Paul's Older Group). Meeting on Sunday evenings, they have a spirit of friendship and support, with a range of fun activities and an annual residential trip. They explore their faith or what faith might mean to them through games, challenges, fun and food!

St Paul's C of E Primary School visit St Paul's
Image credit: St Paul's C of E Primary School





Our local community

Nuneaton is a busy market town in North Warwickshire with a history of mining and manufacturing. The town centre is currently undergoing considerable regeneration and redevelopment with several new large housing developments on its outskirts. It has good transport links, having a bus station and main-line train station and is close to the midlands' motorway system. Its main industries are now linked to logistics and distribution.

Nuneaton's diverse population is served by a number of churches and other places of worship, doctors' surgeries, a hospital, nurseries, schools and a sixth form college. The town centre has a variety of shops, cafés, pubs and a swimming pool and sports' centre.

The local Abbey Theatre stages a variety of events, productions and film nights and the museum in the park offers exhibitions and workshops. Also in Riversley Park is the national memorial to the Gurkha Regiment who have been resident in the local barracks for some time. The recently opened 'Saints' community café in the town centre is supported by a collaboration of local churches and works to enhance physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.

Nuneaton is famous for being the birthplace of author George Eliot (1819) who gives her name to the hospital and a local school and whose works make reference to various people and places in the town, including our own St Paul's, which features in 'Scenes of Clerical Life' as the church on Paddiford Common.

Two miles west of Nuneaton centre is Stockingford. Once a small mining village, it is now part of the larger urban development around the town. It retains much of its village feel with many families having lived here for generations. The population is around 13,500. There are mixed areas of housing including streets of Victorian and early twentieth century terraces, large areas of social housing and newer private estates. There is a mix of socio-economic status but there are areas ranked in the 10% most deprived in the country. The parish serves a mainly working class community. Some residents have little or no experience of religious faith.

Stockingford has a selection of small shops, hairdressers and take-away outlets. There are doctor's surgeries and a post office. There is no real shopping centre and no major industry. There are several pubs in the parish, one of which has been our 'beer and carols' venue for many years. There is one complex of homes for the elderly, and several shared homes for younger adults needing care. Some of these adults with additional needs have made St. Paul's their home church. There are two community centres in the parish, with which the church maintains contact and supports. The parish includes three primary schools (St Paul's CofE School, Stockingford Academy and Park Lane Primary School) and one large secondary school (Nuneaton Academy). There is a library and children's centre with a nursery close to church.

History of St Paul's

In 2024, St. Paul's church celebrated its 200th birthday – 200 years of worship, prayer, celebrations and community involvement in Stockingford.

In around 1819 there were riots in Stockingford when the local hosiery workers took to the streets in protest that their wages were to be reduced. The church of St. Nicolas, in Nuneaton, decided that a 'chapel of ease' should be built to quell the violence and put the 'fear of God' into Stockingford families. In 1824 the new church was opened, dedicated to St. Paul, and in 1857 became a separate parish under the Rev. James Coling.

We had a wonderful 200th year with events displays and special visitors, celebrating with the local community the continuing role of St. Paul's church in Stockingford. Our 200th year of celebration began with a special service led by Bishop Ruth and continued with a Lent course, 'Faith is a Verb', exploring how we live out our faith. Easter was welcomed with a dawn service, followed by an Easter egg hunt and a family communion. In April, we hosted a joyful 'Celebration of Marriage' flower festival featuring beautiful wedding dress displays, intricate floral arrangements, postbox toppers and 'yarn-bomb' flowers around the Ford, and a Songs of Praise service.

Pentecost brought a 'Picnic on the Playground' at St Paul's School, while our Harvest celebration and Scarecrow Festival gathered donations for the Foodbank and Coventry and Warwickshire Mind. During Heritage Week, visitors enjoyed displays and talks about the church's history and its ties to the ribbon-weaving trade, with colourful ribbons adorning the grounds. We also welcomed local author Rosie Goodwin for afternoon tea and, later in the year, singer-songwriter Gareth Davies-Jones led an Advent evening of music, prayer, and meditation. A vibrant Nativity Festival filled the church with countless representations of the Christmas story, supporting the charity Embrace the Middle East. To close this memorable year and mark the start of our third century, a newly designed and lovingly created altar frontal was dedicated for our continuing worship.

Image credit: WCC





Safeguarding

We take our safeguarding responsibilities extremely seriously at St Paul's. The new incumbent will work closely with our Safeguarding Officer, the church wardens and the PCC to ensure we maintain our standards and offer a safe, loving environment to enable us worship God and interact with our local community.

Safeguarding is a standing item on the PCC agenda, and we have a report on the Safeguarding Dashboard on a quarterly basis. The Safeguarding Officer (SGO), Church Wardens and Growing Faith Worker are completing the leadership training in safeguarding offered by the Diocese. It is the role of the SGO to ensure the Hub and the Dashboard is maintained and updated.

All members of PCC, deputy church wardens, and group leaders or people working with children and vulnerable adults are safely recruited, and have completed basic, foundation and domestic abuse safeguarding training.



The team



We endeavour to provide good support to our vicar in carrying out their ministry.

St Paul's has a lay reader, Colin, who regularly leads services and preaches. We have a good number of gifted lay people who are involved in leadership and worship. There is a group of volunteers who act as servers and welcomers. There are two church wardens (Nigel and David) and four deputy church wardens (Hugh, Lesley, Liz and Phillip).

Our PCC meets every other month, and has four management groups focusing on different aspects of our church life (Worship & Spirituality, Social, Pastoral Care and Buildings & Finance). These management groups are well established and effective, and provide healthy structures for planning and decision making.

The Worship and Spirituality group works with the incumbent to plan services and celebration of major festivals and seasons, for example planning the Lent Courses, Holy Week services and Advent meditations. They work to enable the growth of faith and spirituality in our congregation.

The Social group organises the Summer Gala, Christmas Bazaar and many other social and charitable events throughout the year.

The Pastoral Care group manage the prayer circle, for regular and emergency prayer needs. They provide loving support for people through life events, illnesses, bereavement and celebrations.

The Buildings and Finance group monitor finances, the letting of the buildings, and repair and maintenance of the buildings. They are a practical, skilled and knowledgeable team with members who are willing and able to carry out many jobs themselves.

We have two members of paid staff, our part-time Growing Faith worker, Sarah, and a cleaner, Kim. A volunteer administrator, Anne, provides support to the incumbent in the office, record keeping and admin for Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals. We also have a talented group of volunteers who provide floral arrangements throughout the year, as well as volunteers for regular tasks such as brass cleaning.





The Church buildings

The church is a substantial brick-built grade 2 listed building which was commissioned in 1824. The building has undergone many changes over the years and now offers a large, flexible and well-equipped worship/meeting space. A parish centre was added to the side of the building in the 1990s (this is now the entrance to the church), and 17 years ago, the whole of the inside of the church was reordered.

The Parish Centre includes a large foyer which houses our permanent 'fairly traded' stall, a disabled WC and shower, male and female toilets. The foyer leads on to a large versatile lounge area, an office, a prayer/counselling room, store room, and a well-equipped kitchen.

The main church building space can be used as a multi-functional space, with a small kitchenette, store rooms and a crèche with baby changing/toilet facilities. The furniture can be arranged to suit different purposes, for different types of services and for community groups and activities. There is a balcony which can be used as an over-flow space during services.

The main church building and the main room of the parish centre are available to let to community groups and events, something which provides a regular income, but we are always on the lookout for new opportunities to increase revenue and enable a wider more diverse interaction with the wider community. Both the church and the centre are busy, being in use most of the week for worship and for church and community groups.

The building is in good repair and is well decorated. The church community is lucky to have a group of volunteers within the congregation who are skilled in many aspects of maintenance and DIY who are able to keep the building in excellent repair. In 2024 the audio and visual systems were upgraded. We have been awarded the Bronze Eco-Church award and are keen to improve on this.

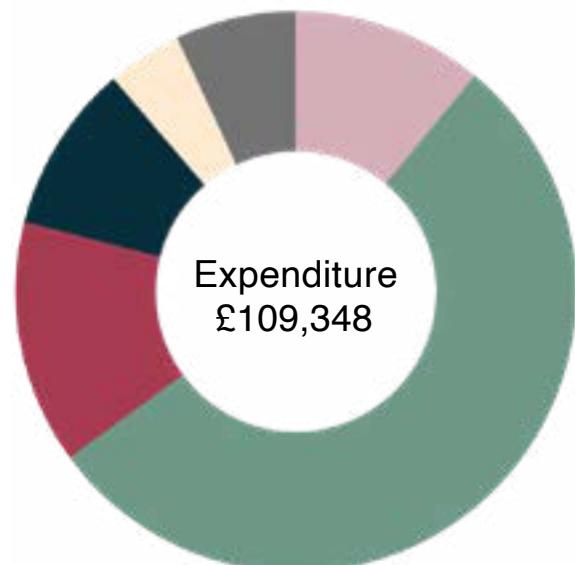
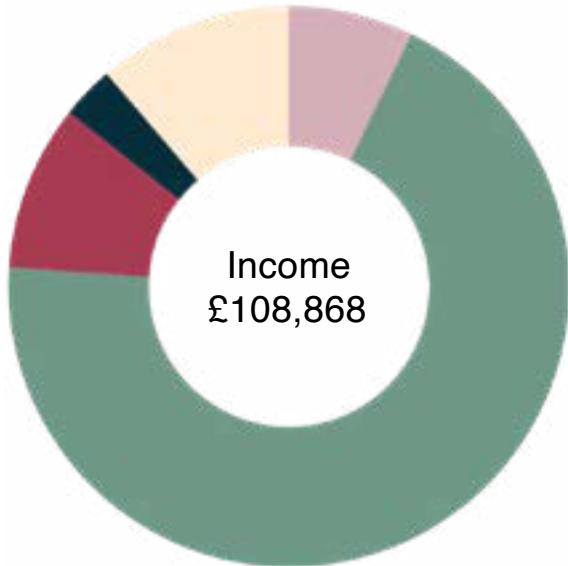
The Vicarage

The vicarage was built in the 1960s and is a brick-built detached house with tile roof.

The accommodation comprises of: entrance hall, a large study immediately to the left of the entrance, rear lounge which overlooks the garden, separate dining room with French windows that open on to the garden, kitchen, utility room and cloakroom. The first floor has four good sized bedrooms, a family bathroom and a separate cloakroom.

The garden comprises a large lawn, with mature borders on three sides. The eastern boundary shares a wall with the churchyard, which can be accessed through a low wooden gate. There is an integrated garage, and outside parking for three cars. There is a closable gate across the entrance.

Finances (2024)



Parish funds

Unrestricted £77,653	Designated £27,647
Restricted £465	Total £105,765

Click [here](#) to read the full 2024 accounts.

Facts and figures

Attendance at services

Sunday 8am average 7 adults
Sunday 10am average 60 adults and 1 child
Wednesday 10am average 14 adults
Easter Sunday 83 adults and 21 children (2024)

Outreach

Scarecrow Festival Workshop 60 adults and children
Stay and Play 25–30 families
Lunch Club 25 adults
Nativity crib weekend over 150 visitors

Children's services

Holiday Club 40 children
Mini Messy Church 3–4 families
Messy Church 25 children
Experience Easter 265 children

Electoral roll 89

Life events (2024)

Baptisms 14
Weddings 3
Funerals 20



Thankyou for taking the time to read about our parish and the work that God is already doing in our community. In dreaming big and trusting God, this profile mentions many areas where we need help. Are you the person who can do some of these things for the next season of life at St Paul's? Is God calling you to Stockingford?

Contact information

Informal conversations very welcome with: Alison Evans:
htavicar1@gmail.com or 024 7673 6002

For further details and an application form please contact: Debbie Niblett, HR Officer and Archdeacon's Administrator by email to Debbie.Niblett@Coventry.Anglican.org

An application form can be downloaded from the diocesan website:
<https://coventry.anglican.org/who-are-we/vacancies/currentvacancies/clergy-vacancies.php>

An Enhanced DBS disclosure is required for this post.



St Paul's, Stockingford
Loving God, Loving the 'Ford

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. *1 Corinthians 13:4-7*