

# St Mary's Ecumenical Church Weaverham

*The mission of the church is to share the light and hope of Jesus within  
our community*



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

The **Methodist** Church 

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# Introduction

Thank you for your enquiry about our vacancy.

St. Mary's is a friendly, welcoming Church and we hope that you feel called to investigate us further. We believe that God wants his Church to grow here in Weaverham, and we have, prayerfully, put together the attached Profile.

We are an accessible and functional Church, welcoming to everyone and we try to be at the centre of our village community. We want to inspire and support those of all ages who seek to enrich their understanding of the Christian faith and in pursuit of these goals we pray that we can come to know Jesus better and make Him known to others.

Weaverham is a great place to live and work. The sense of community in the village is tangible and this is borne out by the many events that are organised by the various local groups.

You may like to visit our website to check us out a bit more, but there is nothing like personal contact so why not 'come and see' as Jesus would put it. [*John 1 vs 39 - 41*] - you'll be very welcome.



## Our Finances

- St. Mary's is in the fortunate position of being financially secure. We have a Stewardship Campaign each year. Some give regularly through our envelope scheme and many more by Standing Order transfer, that is supplemented by Gift Aid.
- We pay our Parish Share and Methodist Circuit Fees in full each year.
- In terms of clergy and other expenses, these are paid in full.
- All maintenance work on buildings etc. is carried out as needed.
- We give away each year to a mix of local and overseas agencies. Home Mission - The Church Army; Transforming Lives Together; Friends of Chester Cathedral. Overseas Mission: Companions of Melanesian Brotherhood; Mid Cheshire Methodist Circuit Kenya Fund. At Harvest time all our non-perishable goods go to the local Food Bank.
- We have an emergency disaster fund, which is allocated annually depending on world issues. In 2017 this went to Save the Children for Rohingya refugees and Christian Aid for Syrian refugees.
- Members of the congregation also raise funds through sponsored events. Over the past year they include Manchester half marathon for Alzheimer's Research UK & the MU; the annual Ride & Stride event; a cycle ride for Lighthouse funds and St. Luke's Hospice.

### Finance Returns

2017	£
Parish Funds	77,100
Parish Income Excl. Capital and Legacies	99,818*
Tax Efficient Planned Giving	57,940
Average Amount per week / Giver	12.60
Parish Expenditure	103,957
Parish Share and Methodist Circuit Fee	56,815 5,342 Fully paid up

\* **Note:** This includes Gift Aid due to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017 of £14,485 which was received in February 2018

## Who we are

- We are an **open, friendly, Evangelical Church in an Ecumenical Partnership** with the Weaverham Methodists since October 2009, and a history of variety in our service styles. We have people from all walks of life, some of whom have been worshipping at St. Mary's all their lives. We have 3 services on Sunday and a mid-week communion service on a Wednesday morning. Methodist Services are held regularly and we are supported by a Methodist Minister.
- We have **two retired ministers** in the parish who regularly lead worship. **Four readers** [Emeritus but active] who also lead services.
- **Two Church wardens and a Methodist Steward** are supported by a team of sides-people [on rota] who welcome people to worship and assist in the services.
- Lay members of the Church read and lead intercessory prayers [at 10.30am] and a **Prayer Ministry team** is available after the 10.30, in a quiet corner of the church for people who may need prayer.
- **Two licenced Pastoral Workers**, take out Home Communion on a monthly basis, visit those people unable to get to church and run Baptism preparation evenings for parents and Godparents.
- An **amazing team of volunteer Church members** support and run regular community outreach events and activities, some with a history of incumbent leadership and involvement, ranging from a toddler group to a recently established community lunch.
- We have **part-time voluntary office support** in the Lighthouse, where the weekly pew sheet and monthly newsletters are produced.
- Twice monthly prayer meetings are held in the Lighthouse to help us to understand God's plan for us.
- We support the Mid Cheshire Foodbank with a collection point at the back of church. Our harvest donations are all non-perishable and given to the Foodbank.

## What we say

### Why do you come to St. Mary's?

This question was asked of a random group of people at all three services recently. The following comments are a precis of the replies.

**My faith brings me here to worship God**

**The church is part of the village - it's convenient for me**

**It's welcoming and friendly - it feels like home**

**It's Ecumenical and friendly and the main service of the day is relevant**



**I came with a friend and felt the warmth and a feeling of freedom**

**I hear the bells - it makes me want to come. I need to come**

**I was baptised here and have been coming throughout my life**

**To worship Jesus and hear his word with my Church family**

**If I don't come I feel as if I've hurt myself - St. Mary's is my family**

## What we Do - In Church

8.30am Sunday Service	A quiet, thoughtful Communion service, where we use both Common Worship Order Two & BCP on alternate Sundays. Cassock, surplice & scarf are worn
10.30am Sunday Service	This is our main service of the day where we use a multi-media projector for all liturgy and songs. Our All Age Service on the first Sunday of the month, is interactive, includes craft and drama and is designed for everyone to take part. Second and fourth Sundays are Communion [Common Worship - Order One or Methodist Communion] The third and fifth Sundays are Service of the Word. We have Kids4Christ at the 10.30am and the children go across to the Lighthouse for their session, coming back to join the main service. Our Worship Group support the 10.30am service. The group is composed of a pianist, up to four singers, a flautist, and a guitarist. They meet mid-week to prepare for the next Sunday service and to learn new material. The music consists mainly of a range of worship songs but also more traditional hymns. Dress is more casual, although with clerical collar where appropriate. After the service we stay for coffee and fellowship. This is an important part of the service - the congregation sometimes needing encouragement to leave!
6.30pm Sunday Service	This service is supported by a pipe organ, an experienced, robed choir and talented organist. Once a month Order One Common Worship Communion is used and the other Sundays are Evensong, Methodist Evening service or BCP. Service and hymn books are used. The choir are a close-knit community who rehearse weekly and are always ready to support special services and weddings. Cassock, surplice & scarf are usually worn [except at Methodist services] After the service we stay for coffee and fellowship.
Wednesday Communion	A quiet said Common Worship communion service at 10.30am, which usually lasts about 45 minutes.
CHAOS	[Church and Other Stuff] our Messy Church meets monthly on a Saturday afternoon, both in church and the Lighthouse, where dinner is served. For families, CHAOS involves craft, messy stuff, worship and a special Man Shed where dads [and others] can do dad like things with their children. This is a very well attended event, and adverts are sent regularly to local schools.
Saturday Opening	A team of volunteers keep the church open from mid-morning to mid-afternoon on a Saturday, offering tea and coffee, showing people around the church and praying with visitors where appropriate.
Special Services	The Church runs family friendly events and services at Christmas and at other festivals which are particularly well attended by the community; for example the Christingle service is repeated and both services are usually full.
Bell Ringers	The church has a team of accomplished Bell Ringers who ring for Sunday Services and special events, ie weddings throughout the year. Practice night is Tuesday.

## What we Do - In the Lighthouse

<b>Sticky Fingers</b>	A baby, toddler and carer group that meets every Monday morning in the Lighthouse during term time. We have a range of toys, craft activities, refreshments for carers and snacks for the children. We finish with a story, song and a prayer. We currently meet an average of 20 families every week. We have a small team from the Church who run the group, and they are able to invite, and see several families at CHAOS and the All Age Services.
<b>Lunch Club</b>	Once a fortnight we provide a varied carvery luncheon, including a delicious pudding. It is organised by a brilliant team of volunteers and is an outreach for the elderly and socially isolated. It is proving highly successful and growing.
<b>Café Hope</b>	Our regular Tuesday morning 'Coffee Stop' at the Lighthouse. It is a very popular place to be and although most people who come along are members of St. Mary's, we are beginning to see people from the village too. It is an outreach event, everyone is welcome and we hope that those who come as customers go home as friends.
<b>King's Coffee House</b>	Led by two of our Church members who are experienced in special needs areas and supported by a team of helpers, King's meets on a regular basis and is open to any young adult with learning disabilities. Carers come with our visitors and the evenings are fun and rewarding for all concerned.
<b>Thursday Club</b>	Run by members of the Mothers Union, this is an afternoon for anyone to come and join in. Its quite informal with the opportunity for tea and cake and chat or to play a selection of board games, ie. dominoes and Scrabble.
<b>Mothers Union</b>	We have an active branch and value the friendship and support of fellow members. At monthly meetings, speakers cover a range of interesting subjects, often keeping us up to date on local and international concerns. The fundraising events give opportunity for outreach within the community whilst raising funds for MU charities.
<b>Men's Breakfast &amp; Curry Nights</b>	These two events are held bi-monthly. Breakfast is a 'full English' with a Christian speaker and Curry Nights are held in the local curry house.
<b>Men's Society</b>	A group of approximately 20 Church men meet monthly; usually there is a speaker, and light refreshments are available. Together with bowls tournaments, there are visits to places of local interest.

## What we do - In our Homes

<b>Home Groups</b>	There are currently five active Groups that meet in members' homes, mainly in the evening, for fellowship, Bible study and prayer. About 40 people, in total, attend and the groups vary in their composition and needs.
<b>Crafty Christians</b>	Our card and craft making group, meet regularly throughout the year and is open to anyone who wants to come along. Most projects have a Christian theme, often verses from the Bible, and always a strong Christian message.
<b>Knitting &amp; Nattering</b>	Meet on a monthly basis at one of our members homes. The world is put to rights and any knotty knitting problems can be sorted out. It's mainly our older members that take advantage of this opportunity to get together, but it is open to all.
<b>YPF [Young Peoples Fellowship]</b>	A small group meet on a weekly basis in term-time to look at the bible, discuss topics and issues raised and to pray.

## Our Community Links

- The majority of our Church members live within the Parish of Weaverham & Acton Bridge. Many are involved with the local community, working within the village and actively supporting community events. We have Church members who are Parish Councillors, Governors and volunteers at schools and others who are involved with the History Society and the Scouts.
- There are 5 schools in Weaverham, a High School; 3 Primary Schools and 1 Special Needs School. We have excellent links with the schools, our previous incumbent going into three of them to take assemblies on a regular basis.
- The children from the schools visit the church as a part of their curriculum and some have their Christmas services in the church.
- Our previous incumbent was a Governor at the Special Needs School.
- There is an annual Service of Remembrance in the church. The Royal British Legion, the leaders of the local council and uniformed organisations are in attendance. The incumbent leads the service.
- There is one residential care home and some sheltered independent living accommodation in Weaverham and where possible residents come to church. Our pastoral workers visit on a regular basis to chat to residents and sometimes a worship service is organised.
- We have links, through King's Coffee House, with a network of houses for Supported Community Living in Weaverham. We offer support to the residents and the staff team, and they come to church services when possible.

## Where we are going - Our Vision

Following the recent LEP Questionnaire for Churches Together in Cheshire the results summarised as follows:

- **Our strengths** - our welcome; children and family work; the variety of services and fellowship.
- **Our weaknesses** - our connection with the elderly, evangelism and communication.
- **The future** - outreach and evangelism with younger adults, whilst continuing to be a Church nourished by a variety of worship and good, relevant bible teaching.

Using these results and combined with our **Mission Statement 'Sharing the light and hope of Jesus within our community'** we look to the future with confidence as we prayerfully consider:-

- Inspiring and supporting those of all ages who are looking to enrich their understanding of the Christian faith. Providing sound biblical teaching and inspiring worship for all ages.
- Continue to be a lively congregation by offering opportunities to worship in different styles, embracing new ideas with confidence.
- To continue to work on our communication.
- Beginning to work on forming a more far-reaching Pastoral Team to support those in need
- To grow in our own understanding of the gospel so that we become a more Christ-centred and Spirit-filled community of faith.
- To grow in our confidence to enable us to share our faith with others.
- To continue to be an effective Christian presence, touching and transforming our community with God's love.

**We pray for the guidance and support of the Holy Spirit as we try to inspire the work of the Gospel in Weaverham by being open, relevant, considerate and practical in everything we do.**

## What we need:

- **Someone with a love for God and for all people who is willing to take the Church forward in line with our Mission Statement - Sharing the light and hope of Jesus within our community.**

<b>Leader</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A practical visionary who can identify areas for development, motivate and empower us to achieve mission objectives.</li><li>• Able to work collaboratively and is committed to the ecumenical aspect of the Parish.</li></ul>
<b>Communicator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A good communicator, with a range of IT skills, who can engage effectively with people of all ages and backgrounds; with a good sense of humour.</li></ul>
<b>Facilitator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A vibrant individual with the experience and leadership skills to manage a bunch of willing volunteers and develop cooperation between individuals and groups.</li><li>• Someone who can identify and enable others' ministries at all levels.</li></ul>
<b>Teacher</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to engage in a culturally relevant way, and teach us to disciple others from seeds of faith to Christian maturity.</li><li>• Someone who can help us to nurture and deepen our faith through the teaching of the Bible, so that we can share our faith more confidently, be open to the Holy Spirit and become more prayerful.</li></ul>

- **Above all we need a person who is passionate about Jesus. A person of action, who will take Weaverham to their heart and guide and strengthen us as we work together to bring the good news of the gospel to the village.**

## What we offer

The parish of St. Mary's, Weaverham, offers an incumbent: -

- A body of Christ with a heart and desire to be moulded by His Spirit, to become the Church God is calling us to be.
- Good support from our Methodist Minister as part of the Ecumenical Partnership
- Well maintained family sized vicarage next to the church (See Appendix B)
- A Church which can and does pay its Parish Share in full
- Well maintained buildings (See Appendix B)
- A newly refurbished parish centre [The Lighthouse with its own management committee] (See Appendix B)
- Voluntary secretarial help on a regular basis in the Lighthouse
- Existing groups for a variety of ages and needs
- 2 active retired Clergy in the parish
- 4 active Readers Emeritus
- 2 Licensed Pastoral Workers
- An army of volunteers who run all the Church groups and Bible study groups.

## Appendix A: Where we are:

- St. Mary's is located in the centre of Weaverham, and there has been a church on this site for over 1,000 years. There is a large car park in the front of the church, which is used by the village as well as the church. The grave yard is looked after by the local council, who out-source the maintenance to private firms. The Garden of Remembrance is still available for the internment of ashes. Across the road from the church is our Lighthouse Community Centre.
- There are two parades of shops in the village, one just around the corner from the church and the other one about half a mile away. There are two supermarkets and an optician, a hardware store, estate agent, hairdressers, florist, food takeaways, a doctor's surgery, a dentist, library, swimming pool and children's park. We have a Community Centre, whose building is used for a variety of community events and a large field in the centre of the village which is used for many local activities.
- Public Transport - bus service [3 buses per hour] into Northwich, and from there a rail-link to Manchester/Chester. Rail-link at Hartford runs an hourly service to both Liverpool and Crewe/London.
- Road links to the village are good. The A49 to Warrington passes alongside the village, with easy access to the A556 to Chester and M56 and M6.
- Schools in Weaverham:  
Weaverham High School - OFSTED Report 2016 rated the school as 'Good'.  
St. Bede's R.C. Primary School - OFSTED Report 2008 'Outstanding'.  
University Primary Academy Weaverham - OFSTED Report 2016 rated the school 'Requires Improvement'.  
Forest Primary School - OFSTED Report 2017 rated the school as 'Good'.  
The Russett Special School OFSTED Report 2014 'Outstanding'.  
Crowton C.E. Primary School - OFSTED Report 2017 'Good' [Crowton is in close proximity to Weaverham].

### Some facts about our Church

**Patron:** The Bishop of Chester

#### **Electoral Roll:**

147 [2016]

#### **Church Attendance**

Average weekly attendance for 2017 was 119 [over three services]

In addition CHAOS is thriving with an average of 36 adults and 28 children attending each event.

Over the Christmas 2017 period some 622 people attended St. Mary's, which included 432 people at the two Christingle services.

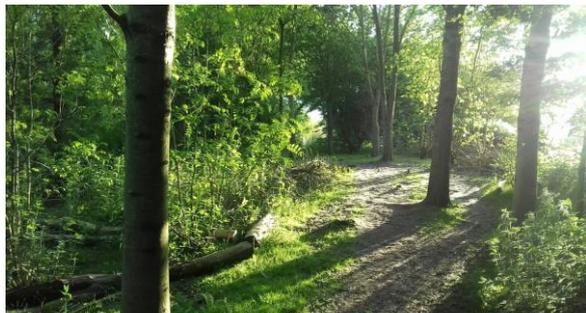
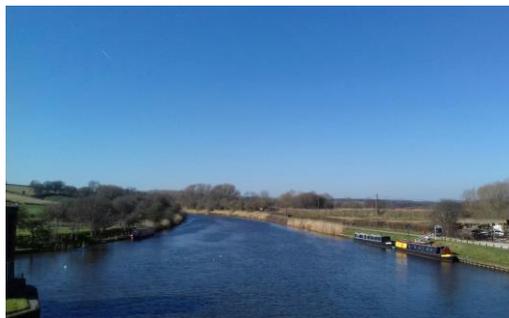
#### **Occasional Offices: [2017]**

Baptisms - 9 Baptisms from 11 Thanksgivings

Weddings - 13

Funerals in church 29

- The parish of Weaverham takes in the village of Acton Bridge. Within the boundaries of the parish, as well as St. Mary's, there is Milton Baptist Church and Acton Bridge Methodist Church. In Weaverham itself there is St. Bede's Roman Catholic Church and the Stronghold Free Church.
- The Parish has its rural side too, with many farms within its boundaries. The River Weaver runs on the edge of the village, and there is close access to the Trent and Mersey Canal.
- Weaverham is in the unique position of being able to enjoy the amenities of local towns and cities and the beauty and tranquillity of the Cheshire countryside.



### Some facts and figures about our Parish

*This information is taken from Diocesan Dashboard and Chester West & Chester JSNA*

Population 2015: 6,350

Age spread:

0 - 17	18 - 44	45 - 64	65+
20%	29%	29%	21% **

\*\* Note National Average 16%

Parish Deprivation Index = 4666

1 = most deprived 12,554 = least deprived

Ethnic Mix - White British 99% Other <1%

Unemployment	1.1%
England	1.9%

Employment:

Management & Professional - 44%  
Administration & skilled trades - 22%

Education Background:

Children with Special Education Needs 10.8%

Children eligible for Free School Meals 12.4%

Pupils achieving GCSE 9-4 in English & Maths 64.6%

# Appendix B: Our Buildings

## The Church

- There has been a church on the site since 1277. Extensive alterations and enlargements took place in the 16<sup>th</sup> & 19th centuries and the church is largely of that period.
- The church holds approximately 300 people and has become more user friendly with the addition of kitchen, toilet and baby changing facilities in 2000 and the refurbishment of the Lady Chapel in 2006. We can accommodate wheelchairs and buggies easily.
- We have a hearing loop, PA system and multimedia projector & screens, piano and organ.
- The last Quinquennial inspection was in October 2017 and all work needing immediate attention was completed. With the exception of the overhaul of the vestry door, no other works are outstanding and the inspection concluded that there were no defects to question the future of the building.
- Major works undertaken in the last 10 years include the overhaul of the tower clock and the painting of the church ceiling.
- The church is heated by gas and the boiler is maintained regularly.
- The church bells are maintained regularly and a new set of ropes was purchased in 2013.
- The building is fully insured and fire extinguishers maintained annually. The lightning conductor is inspected bi-annually and all portable appliances are tested annually.





## The Vicarage

- The vicarage is about 50 years old and is situated next to the church.
- It has a large garden with a greenhouse to the front and enclosed grassed area to the rear with a single attached garage. There is ample parking for several vehicles. There is a gas central heating system installed.
- There are 4 bedrooms and a store room upstairs, together with a recently refurbished bathroom and separate toilet.
- Downstairs consists of: hall; cloakroom; toilet; study; dining room; kitchen and living room with an open fire.



## The Lighthouse

- Across the road from the church is our Lighthouse Community Centre. This 100-year-old building, formerly known as Church House, has been completely refurbished and has a large, new annexe building on one side. After fundraising from grant making trusts, our own congregation and using money from our reserves, a renovation project started in 2013.
- By July 2016 the main Lighthouse building was ready. It comprises of a new entrance hall with disabled access, office, small meeting room, large hall, well equipped kitchen, toilets and store room. It has been in constant use since that time for both church and community events.
- Following a generous donation from the Methodist Church, grant making trusts and other organisations the Annexe is just being completed, and is another valuable resource for the church to continue its outreach into the village and to realise our Mission Statement 'to share the light and hope of Jesus with our community'. Arrangements are in hand for the building to be dedicated.
- The Lighthouse is now used extensively by the church for all sorts of events, and is beginning to be used by the community for activities ranging from birthday parties to cheer-leader classes!