

PARISH PROFILE

The Parish of
St. Bartholomew's,
Penn, & St Anne's,
Lower Penn,
Wolverhampton



Thank you for taking the time to consider
whether you might be our next vicar

2025



<https://www.stbarts.org.uk>
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Church Hill, Penn, Wolverhampton, WV4 5JB



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Safeguarding Statement

We are compliant with Diocesan policies and follow the Safer Recruitment procedure for roles within the church. All PCC members and other key staff and volunteers are trained to the appropriate level for their role and DBS checked where required. Our Parish Safeguarding Officer is experienced and knowledgeable and keeps clear records of when training needs to be updated. Safeguarding is always on the agenda at PCC meetings. We want the culture of our churches to be welcoming and safe for all.

Welcome from the Wardens

Thank you for your interest in this fulfilling and challenging role as Vicar of St Bartholomew's and St Anne's churches in Penn. We hope you enjoy reading our Parish Profile.

We are two churches of very different sizes and styles, but share a common purpose, to make Jesus known in our community, and to build up and encourage each member as they follow him. Our previous Vicar left us at the end of 2024, after a long and fruitful ministry, to take up a Diocesan role. We hope that our next Vicar will be able to build on this good foundation and will have the vision to discern where we are on our journey and to lead us forward, following God's direction.

You will be joining and leading a gifted team of people, with a self-supporting Assistant Minister, retired clergy with PTO, lay ministers and active willing volunteers. We hope that you will nurture our gifts and be able to encourage growth in existing and new areas.

One challenge that we have in common with many churches is the small number of young people in our congregations. Numbers in this age group have reduced significantly over the last 10 years, and uniformed organisations once connected with the church have folded. We hope that creative and innovative ways for outreach can be explored so that this decline can be reversed.

We need a pastor who will love us, a teacher who will guide us, and a godly man or woman who will pray with us and for us, and help us discern the leading of the Spirit as we work together to build God's kingdom here in Penn.

We look forward to hearing from you, if you feel God may be calling you to serve him along with us.

David Nicholls
Janet Shackleton
The Churchwardens



Introduction from the Bishop of Lichfield

Cradled at the intersection of the Midlands and the North, and the interface between England and Wales, the Diocese of Lichfield is the ancient centre of Christianity in what was the Kingdom of Mercia. St Chad, Lichfield's first Bishop, journeyed around Mercia with heavenly hope and the good news of Christ's resurrection. He believed that there was 'a new opening for the gospel' in Mercia. Many people became followers of Jesus.

Accounts of the apostles' journeys, as they travelled in the power of the Spirit, with little other than the stories of Christ's life, crucifixion and resurrection, were Chad's only companions. His plan to walk Mercia was as daring in its simplicity and boldness as God trusting the gospel first to the shepherds and then to just twelve apostles. Chad set out believing that he would bear fruit, and that the kingdom of God would grow. Bede describes Chad as 'humble, devout, zealous and apostolic'.

Today, in our much more complex world, I recognise a similar opening for the Gospel in these parts and I invite you to join with me in seizing this opportunity to follow Christ in the humble, devout, zealous and apostolic footsteps of St Chad.

Over the centuries, we have become immersed in Chad's legacy - as we are immersed in Christ at baptism. Chad's church of ordinary Mercian people became a growing community of Christian faith through the example of Chad's pilgrim life and ministry pointing to Jesus. This must have encouraged him in his arduous and sacrificial journey for the sake of the gospel. To truly follow Christ in Chad's footsteps today, we must be committed to this life and ministry. **This is zealous.**

Chad's legacy of a vibrant community of faith leads us today to charge our clergy with nurturing, outside weekly worship, confident knowledge of the faith handed down to us. Such faith is characterised by a readiness in each member of our worshipping communities to speak about what Jesus Christ means in their lives and how they are being shaped by him. Doing this, we will recognise and rejoice in the gifts of all those, lay and ordained, who contribute to the life and ministry of our churches. **This is apostolic.**

Our clergy should take responsibility for their own flourishing and effectiveness, supported by the wellbeing and learning programmes in development and through prioritising participation in peer support and review. Chad would have been spurred on seeing God's unfolding plan in Mercia, just as the flourishing of the gifts of all God's people can contribute to our clergy's human flourishing and effectiveness as ministers. **This is humble.**

Together, as the Body of Christ in this place, reflecting Chad's legacy in giving priority to purposeful evangelism, creative engagement with local communities, and to becoming more diverse and growing younger, our trajectory is given full expression in our diocesan strategy, 'Seeking the Kingdom'. It is a manifesto for what I invite us by God's grace to achieve as a diocese.

If we are to truly follow in Chad's footsteps together, we will go forward with his devotion to prayer. So doing, we will go believing that God will be faithful and will build his kingdom. **This is devout.**

Our journey together begins with our vision prayer:

As we follow Christ in the footsteps of St Chad, we pray that the two million people in our diocese encounter a church that is confident in the gospel, knows and loves its communities, and is excited to find you, O God already at work in your world. We pray for a church that reflects the richness and variety of those communities. We pray for a church that partners with others in seeking the common good, working for justice as a people of hope.

+Michael



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Welcome from the Bishop of Wolverhampton

Now is a truly exciting time to serve God in the Wolverhampton Episcopal Area!

The Wolverhampton Episcopal Area (WEA) covers a large geographic area, from beautiful, rural Staffordshire and Shropshire, where churches lie at the heart of village communities, to the bustling and diverse urban centres of Wolverhampton, Lichfield, Walsall, Cannock and the Black Country.

The WEA genuinely offers the widest possible range of ministry contexts, including parishes, new worshipping communities, and many chaplaincy contexts - schools, prisons, hospitals, universities, hospices, and the full breadth of Anglican traditions.

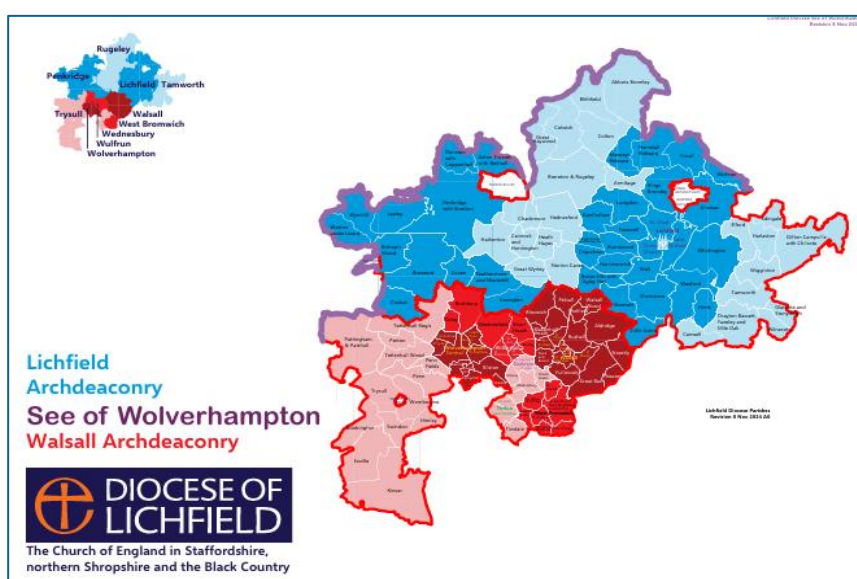
The WEA Team and I would love to speak with you about your sense of God's call and help you explore opportunities to join us as we serve together—worshipping God, dwelling in His Word, and praying; seeking to equip and strengthen faithful disciples; and joining in God's mission to share the Gospel message of Jesus Christ with all in our communities, making new disciples.

Please read on and be assured that we are praying for those discerning God's call to join the wonderful Wolverhampton Episcopal Area. Feel free to get in touch about this or any other vacancy.



Yours sincerely in Christ

The Rt Revd Dr Tim Wambunya
Bishop of Wolverhampton



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Welcome from the Trysull Deanery

Trysull Deanery is a wonderfully diverse area right on the southern tip of the Diocese. We straddle the border between the City of Wolverhampton and South Staffordshire and our parishes range from inner city, to suburban and rural. The Deanery comprises 13 parishes and 21 churches served by 11.5 clergy (FTE). In addition to the stipendiary incumbents there are a number of SSM's, Curates in training, Licensed Readers, and retired clergy with PTO. Three of the Deanery parishes have established Team Ministries and only one parish is a single church benefice. Our Deanery is busy and active, with great support from lay members of our church communities.

The area is primarily residential with some light industry and also some farming in the more rural parishes. The clergy chapter meets regularly, and given the fairly large geographical area, combines a mixture of online and in-person gatherings. Our meetings combine prayer, inviting speakers, supportive conversations and social events. The hope is that we are a supportive, welcoming and friendly group. All our Parishes welcome the ministry of both men and women.

Our Deanery Vision The vision, mission and ministry of the Diocese is focused around the three priority areas of discipleship, vocation and evangelism (DVE) - as we follow Christ in the footsteps of the first Bishop of Lichfield, St Chad.

Over the past couple of years, across the Diocese, deaneries have been involved in the Shaping for Mission process which aims to strengthen our life of developing discipleship, encouraging vocation and inspiring evangelism in the context of our vision, while facing a significant reduction in financial income.

Within Trysull Deanery, Shaping for Mission has resulted in an active focus on how we might practically and spiritually collaborate better, supported by a Mission Enabling Team with representation from each team/benefice/parish. The team's vision is: to continue to deepen our collaborative support for each parish/benefice/team as they each seek to join in God's mission in their specific locations in many and varied ways.

Amongst the team's roles is encouraging and supporting mission ideas and plans in parishes. So far, collaboration has deepened through the creation of a Chapter for Lay Ministers; ensuring Deanery Synod meetings are relevant and offer space for members of our churches to share their experience, expertise and challenges; the creation of a network for those involved in children and youth ministries; and the production of a Deanery Prayer diary.

The Deanery clergy and congregations are committed to the continued development of our relationships and collaboration as we now engage with the emerging Strategic Framework for Discipleship, Evangelism and Vocation, recently presented by the Senior Staff, which builds on Shaping for Mission.

Revd Julia Cody. Rural Dean, Team Rector Smestow Vale.

revjulia.rector@gmail.com



Our Churches – an Introduction



St Bart's church

St Bartholomew's Church is always known locally as St Bart's. Sited on the top of the hill in the ancient settlement of Upper Penn, which is mentioned in the Domesday Book, it has been a landmark and focus of worship for over 1000 years.

Today we attract a large and committed congregation, who are seeking to bring the message and reality of God to our own generation, as we grow in faith together.



St Anne's church

St Anne's church was built in the village of Lower Penn about 150 years ago, as part of the outreach from St Bart's. This small rural church remains an integral part of the parish, supported by the clergy, lay leaders, and a small but active congregation. Our separate planning team meets regularly to create our relaxed and friendly all-age services.



What we do now

Children and Young People

- Led by Junior Church Leader with parent volunteer helpers
- We meet during the morning service and join the main congregation for Communion and a "show and tell" session
- At present mainly pre-school and KS1 age children

Junior Church



- Our pre-school worship meets on a Thursday afternoon in term-time
- Songs, bible stories, refreshments and playtime
- A time for parents and carers to enjoy worship at a simple level

Butterflies



- Wear purple hoodies and lead singing on Sunday mornings
- Trained by our experienced Hoodie Director, developing vocal skills and simple part-singing
- Some hoodie members go on to join the evening choir

Hoodie Choir



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Adults

- Several small groups meet during the week in homes or at the church
- Follow the theme of "Welcome, Word, Worship, Witness"

Life Groups



- Held annually, led by clergy with lay support
- Acts as our Confirmation Preparation, with people being confirmed each year

Alpha Course



- This course prepared by the Diocese is facilitated by our Assistant Minister
- Held every 2 years
- Covers a wide range of discussion topics based around the Christian year

Living Faith Course



- Marriage preparation classes are provided for all couples booking weddings, and are led by a lay couple

Marriage Preparation



Adults (continued)

- Monthly daytime meeting with a speaker
- Monthly communion service
- Trips and meals out to build friendships among the enthusiastic membership
- Building our Christian focus and outreach

Mothers' Union



- This popular weekly event draws in many regular attenders from the community to enjoy coffee, cakes, and friendship
- The group is very supportive for those who are lonely or bereaved

Coffee Morning



- Our bell tower contains 8 bells which are rung for all main services, and for weddings if required
- The team also ring handbells on certain festival occasions
- The friendly team practices weekly and is happy to welcome and train new ringers

Bell Ringers



- Our robed 4-part choir includes adults and young people and sings traditional choral music
- Sings at Evensong and seasonal services
- Led by experienced Choral Director and Organist
- Annual summer tour to cathedrals

Evening Choir



The Challenge – we need a talented priest ...

To bring a fresh eye to the life of our church in order to lead us forward in our journey with God

To feed our faith in understanding scripture, in prayer, and in spiritual depth

To integrate into and manage a large and established team

To nurture, enable and encourage each person in their individual ministry

To further develop and use the skills of our lay ministers

To reach out to and retain more families with young children and to attract, engage and develop younger adults

To work with the existing team to increase our engagement with the village community at St Anne's

To help us become more aware of and engaged with social justice issues

To help us engage with the wider Diocesan Strategic Framework in order to set priorities for us as a church and to develop an updated Mission Action Plan.

More details on the Framework can be found at:

<https://d3hgrlq6yacptf.cloudfront.net/5f3fdd147bb3/content/pages/documents/seeking-the-kingdom-2025-1.pdf>

We need you to help and inspire us to move forward from a strong base, to build on our strengths, to clarify and attend to the areas that need development, and to be a shepherd who will help us listen to Jesus the Good Shepherd, to love and follow him.



Who we are looking for

We are praying that God will lead us to someone who:

- Will be a shepherd who loves people and can care compassionately for the flock of God.
 - Can critically appraise where we are as a church and find ways to move forward collaboratively.
 - Is a person with creativity and vision, willing to innovate.
 - Has a personal and active relationship with God, fed by regular retreats and Quiet Days and by a daily rhythm of personal prayer. We would encourage you to meet regularly with a Spiritual Director.
 - Can demonstrate their own consistent growth in faith.
 - Preaches in a relevant, accessible, understandable way, bringing the bible to life, making Jesus real, and presenting an appropriate challenge.
 - Has a spiritual passion and vision to preach the gospel and bring people to Christ.
 - Will be a leader who will provide strategic oversight rather than micro-management.
 - Has experience of working with, leading and developing the gifting of a large and diverse team.
 - Has a proven track record of being able to reach out to children, families and young people.
 - Is missional at heart, with a passion for social justice.
 - Has a sense of humour, and personal resilience.
 - Communicates well, is approachable, open, and a good listener.
 - Will expect to engage with the wider Diocesan Strategy.
- It is also a requirement that the Incumbent of Penn becomes a Governor of St Bartholomew's CE Primary School. They are also required to become Trustee of three local charities which all have historic and current links to the church:
 - [THE ALMSHOUSE CHARITY OF RAPHAEL AND ANN SEDGWICK - Charity 216498](#)
 - [WYNN'S FOUNDATION - Charity 528828](#)
 - [THE PENN, ST BARTHOLOMEW AND ST PHILIP CHARITY - Charity 222445](#)



What we can offer

Teamwork

- A great team of clergy and lay leaders who can share leading services and preaching.
- Services at St Anne's are planned and led independently by an experienced lay team.
- A regular supportive "preacher's group" meeting, to share ideas.

People and Skills

- An office based within the church with experienced administrative support and facilities manager.
- Supportive Churchwardens and PCC, with members having a variety of professional expertise, and who are open to new ideas and initiatives.
- An experienced and caring pastoral team who can carry out home visiting, care home services and home communions.

Environment and Wellbeing

- A pleasant location in which to live.
- The PCC will be supportive of your health and wellbeing, and encourage you to take days off, holidays, and regular retreats. We care for our ministers.

Welcoming Church Community

- A current electoral roll of 213 adults (April 2025 revision) and generally good sized congregations.
- A range of views and preferences within the congregations, and the ability to disagree well.
- A good learning environment for a potential curate and for people seeking vocation experience placements.

Facilities and Resources

- The church is financially stable.
- The buildings are in good condition with new lighting, heating, organ restoration, AV system, live streaming capability.



Meet the Team

Revd Alison Storer, Assistant Minister (self-supporting)

I have been at St Bartholomew's for 30 years, first as a member of the congregation and then was licensed as a Lay Reader in 2012. I was ordained in 2018 and was privileged to serve my curacy here whilst working virtually full time as a GP. I retired from medicine at the end of 2021. I take a full role in all the services, including all the occasional offices, and the discipleship life of the church. I am also one of the recently appointed Assistant Diocesan Director of Ordinands. I am happy to serve in just about any capacity as long as no one asks me to sing! I still feel a strong call to serve the people of Penn and am excited to see how that continues to evolve over time.



Michael Hibbs, Reader

I am a Licensed Reader (41 years) and I lead worship and preach at St Anne's and at St Bart's. I also organise the leadership team at St Anne's in planning services and events. I am an employment lawyer (consultant) for a national law firm but based in Birmingham and I am about to reduce my commitment there to two days a week. I am also just finishing a short stint as Deputy Diocesan Registrar for Birmingham Diocese. I help as a DrawBreath conversations

volunteer at Chaplaincy in Birmingham providing a listening ear to those who need it.

Su Turner, Reader

I was Licensed as Lay Minister (Reader) in 2017. I work alongside the clergy and other lay ministers at St Bartholomew's and St Anne's, preaching and leading services at both churches. These include Bereavement Services and Choral Evensong. I am called to meet people wherever they are on their spiritual journey and walk alongside them. In preaching I relate the scripture to the ordinary and the minutiae of life so listeners can recognise where God is working in their lives and understand his message for them. I work part time at Penn Hall Special School as Parent Support, working with parents of children with complex needs.



Permission to Officiate, and others

The Parish is very fortunate to have several retired priests who all participate in leading services and preaching, taking the occasional offices etc. We have five authorised lay ministers, each with their own remit.

There are two employed members of staff, a parish administrator and a facilities manager.

Ethos and Style of Worship

St Bartholomew's sits at the centre of the Anglican tradition, but as a large church individuals within the congregation hold a wide variety of preferences around worship and doctrine. We are thankful that we have been able to hold all these different views prayerfully and faithfully and to hold the middle ground. A lay minister ran the Living in Love and Faith course several times to accommodate most people, but attendance at the course was low. Within the congregation the whole range of views on this are held and expressed. Currently we do not have an LLF policy, and would like the new vicar to sensitively explore this with us as a community, so all voices can be heard and a policy representative of us as a church can be developed and implemented.



The worship band leads the musical worship on a monthly basis.

We celebrate all major festivals, for example, Ash Wednesday with imposition of ashes, Maundy Thursday with stripping of the altar, Tenebrae on Good Friday, Ascension Day.

We see ourselves as traditional, relaxed but reverent.

We are committed to caring for our local community and our world by tithing the voluntary income of the church to those in need, and by caring for creation.

We offer a wide variety of services, each with their own faithful congregation. We provide the traditional services of 1662 BCP and Evensong, and Common Worship at the main Communion service. In the school holidays, the choir is stood down and we offer Compline instead of Evensong. We have a robed choir in the evenings and the hoodie choir in the morning, both processing in behind a crucifer. We generally use the lectionary, with the occasional sermon series, e.g. Practical help with ways to pray (Lent 2024).



St Anne's is a small rural predominately lay-led congregation, where we do not follow the lectionary but tend to take a theme or a book of the Bible. A small team plans the services, and music is provided in the form of tracks. The St Anne's team and the clergy take turns to preach. It is an informal service, and provides a safe place to worship for those with additional needs or vulnerabilities e.g. Dementia, neurodivergent children, mental health issues. We are trying to engage with the farming community at a deeper level and have celebrated various landmarks of the farming year e.g. Lammas. We have re-instituted the tradition of carols on the green which attracts approximately 100. There is a monthly communion service, and all major festivals are celebrated. We have also celebrated weddings and baptisms.

Our regular services at St Barts

Sunday 08.00 BCP Communion

Traditional said service with small and committed congregation.

Sunday 10.00 Parish Eucharist

Our main service follows Common Worship with seasonal variations, with music led by our Hoodie children's choir. Once a month our worship band brings more contemporary music. Our Junior Church is held at the same time, with the children joining towards the end of the service.

Sunday 17.30 Choral Evensong (term time)

Full choral evensong led by our accomplished musicians and choir, with a sermon.

Sunday 17.30 Compline (school holidays)

This peaceful said service follows the traditional Night Prayer.

Wednesday 09.15 Reflective Holy Communion

Meeting in the Lady Chapel, this friendly group gives chance to discuss the bible reading and to celebrate communion in a smaller setting.

Saturday 17.30 Holy Communion

A place for those who find Sunday morning difficult to attend, perhaps because of age or other commitments. This service includes the same hymns and sermon as the Sunday, and is an innovative opportunity which is highly valued by those who attend.

Daily 09.00 Morning Prayer (except Wednesday & Sunday)

Led by various members of the congregation, and open to all.

Our regular services at St Anne's

Sunday 11.45 All-age Worship

A relaxed family service, mainly lay-led, with communion once a month. Services follow a variety of themes, often based around bible books or characters. Music, both hymns and more modern songs, is provided through tracks. St Anne's provides a warm and caring community and welcomes some who have significant vulnerabilities.



Festivals

Bereavement Services

Services are held twice a year, to which recently bereaved families are invited to remember their loved ones and light a candle.

Advent

An Advent service, with choral music and readings, is held on the evening of the first Sunday in Advent.

Christmas and Epiphany

Our Christmas celebrations include Carol Singing on the Green, outside both St Bart's and St Anne's. At St Bart's our Carols by Candlelight services, featuring both choirs, are so popular that two services are required to accommodate everyone. We hold a quiet and thoughtful Blue Christmas service, which is always well attended and much appreciated. On Christmas Eve we have a Crib Service for very young children and families, our Christingle service for families (several hundred in attendance in 2024), and Midnight Mass at 11.30pm, preceded by "nearly midnight Mass" at 9pm for those who prefer an early night. On Christmas morning we have 8am BCP Communion, followed by our Christmas Family Communion at 10am.

St Anne's holds its own Carol Service which is well attended by people from the village, and has also re-introduced the tradition of outdoor carol singing on the village green.

We also celebrate Epiphany with a Carol Service in January, led by the choir.

Lent and Easter

We begin Lent with our Ash Wednesday Communion services, including imposition of ashes.

In Holy Week we have Maundy Thursday Communion with choir, including hand/foot washing, and ending by stripping the altar. Some years we have held an overnight vigil for prayer and meditation after this.

On Good Friday we hold a Tenebrae service with choir, readings and meditations. At the end the lights are dimmed low for a period of silent prayer.

On Holy Saturday there is a time of prayer and opportunity to lay down burdens at the cross.

Easter Sunday begins with our outdoor sunrise service and renewal of baptismal vows, on the Green outside St Barts with its expansive view across the Worcestershire hills. Following breakfast, our celebrations continue in our regular Sunday service times.



Ascension Day

There is a choral communion service on the evening of Ascension Day, to celebrate this often-neglected festival.

Remembrance

The traditional Remembrance Day Service with uniformed organisations and the British Legion is held annually, and always well attended.

Average attendances for 2024 (may include multiple attendees)

	Adults	Children	Total
Saturday 5.30	21	--	21
Sunday 8.00	20	--	20
Sunday 10.00	94	15	109
Sunday 5.30	50	6	56
Wednesday 9.15	13	--	13
St Anne's 11.45	11	1	12
SEASONAL SERVICES TOTAL ATTENDANCE			
Advent & Carol Services	461	48	509
Christmas Eve & Day	560	143	703
Ash Wednesday (am&pm)	85	6	91
Holy Week	168	4	172
Easter	328	29	357
Ascension Day	64	5	69

Number of Occasional Offices 2024

- Baptisms 24 (held monthly on Sunday afternoons, biannually at 10.00 service)
- Weddings 11
- Funerals 50 across both church and crematoria (+ 29 ashes interments)



Our Parish

The Parish of Penn straddles the suburban edge of Wolverhampton, and rural South Staffordshire. It is a predominantly residential area, with some agriculture.

St Anne's is a country church in the small commuter village of Lower Penn, which is surrounded by farmland. It is about 10 minutes' drive from St Bart's church. Lower Penn has one pub and a community hall. The nearby Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal provides beautiful local walks.



St Bart's is situated on the top of a hill, in the conservation area of Upper Penn, with an extensive view of the countryside. The surrounding suburban area includes a mix of rented and privately owned properties. The busy Penn and Warstones roads have a mix of local shops, small businesses, cafés, pubs and restaurants. There is easy access from St Bart's to green belt land, including Penn Common, and the golf course.

Within the parish there are two primary schools (St Bart's and Springdale), a popular secondary school (Highfields), and two special schools which both cater for the full age range from early years to post 16 (Penn Hall and Penn Fields).



Locally there is a doctor's surgery, pharmacy, dentist and optician, together with several residential care homes for different client groups. Penn Hospital specialises in mental health issues. Staff from some of these bring residents to church services and the weekly coffee morning.

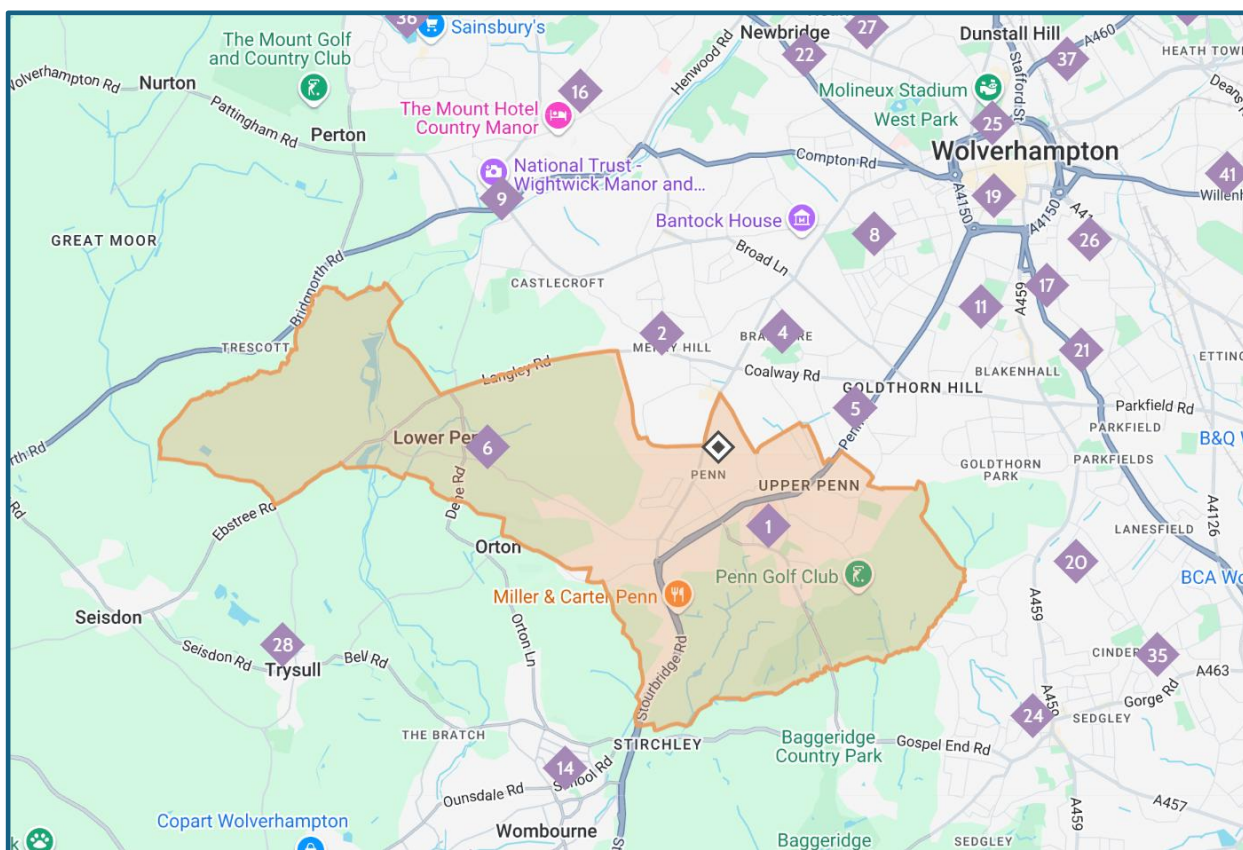
The population of this parish is **11349**. It ranks **7206** out of **12239**, where 1 is the most deprived parish.

Adults with no qualifications	16.4%
Social housing	5.6%
Adults aged 65 or older	22.9%
Ethnic diversity	32%

Statistics from Church Urban Fund (Census 2021 Data)



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Map of the parish of Penn and surroundings

taken from <http://www.achurchnearyou.com> and reproduced by kind permission.

St Bartholomew's church = 1. St Anne's church = 6



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The Vicarage



The vicarage is a 4-bedroom house with driveway for several cars and a garage. It is situated almost opposite St Bartholomew's church and shielded from the road by trees. The garden is mainly laid to grass. The house backs on to St Barts Primary School playground.

The ground floor consists of a spacious hallway with a porch, storage areas and a toilet leading off it. There is a large living room and separate dining room, study, kitchen and utility room. Upstairs are four bedrooms and a house bathroom with separate toilet. The house has gas central heating.



The City of Wolverhampton

Wolverhampton is ethnically diverse, with substantial Sikh and Hindu communities and places of worship. Interfaith Wolverhampton is an active charity working for mutual respect and understanding between the different groups.

The city boasts an art gallery, a theatre, concert venues, and a National Trust property (Wightwick Manor), as well as the Wolves football ground at Molineux. New Cross Hospital provides emergency services and some regional specialities. In the city centre are Wolverhampton University and Wolverhampton College, together with the Mander and Wulfrun shopping centres with popular high street chains. Other amenities and facilities of a modern city are well represented. There are strong transport links, with direct trains to places such as London, Glasgow, Bristol, the Welsh Coast, as well as local trains, a bus station, and a tram line to Birmingham. The National Exhibition Centre and Birmingham Airport are easily reached by car or direct train. There is good access to the motorway network. West of the city lies the beautiful Shropshire countryside.



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Our Buildings

St Bartholomew's church

History

There has been Christian worship on this hilltop site since around AD1025. The remains of an ancient preaching cross can be seen outside the south wall of the church. Priests from the priory in Dudley would read and explain the gospel to people who gathered here. The first Church building was built in around AD1200 by Sir Hugh de Bushbury. It was probably a wooden structure, but was quickly followed by a small stone building, parts of which can still be seen in what is now the north aisle. The building was expanded and renovated over the years and much of what is now seen dates from Victorian times.

For more detail on history please see: <https://www.stbarts.org.uk/history-st-bartholomews-church-penn>

Present day



St Bartholomew's is a stone building with brick facings, and has a bell tower with clock and 8 bells. The Church is Grade 2 listed. Within the church there are fixed pews. The chancel contains choir stalls. There is a high altar (now rarely used) and a nave altar. A smaller side chapel is used for daily morning prayer and for the Butterflies preschool worship. The vicar's vestry opens off this.

The church is always open in daylight hours, and local people regularly pop in to enjoy some quiet space, or maybe light a

candle, when passing by or when collecting children from school.

There is a modern extension (the Oak Room complex) which contains the church office, toilets, a reception area, a small kitchen for drinks preparation, and the Oak Room hall, regularly used for coffee mornings, Junior church, and for hire to various groups and parties.



Across the road next to the Green there is a car park for around 25 cars and the St Barts Community Church Hall. This was constructed in 1913, and is used extensively by hire groups, managed by our Facilities Manager. The building has a large hall with a stage, kitchen with cooking facilities, toilets, and several smaller rooms, along with storage spaces.

All the buildings are in a good state of repair. Our recent (2024) quinquennial did not show any major issues. The heating system was recently renewed, and a low energy programmable lighting system has been installed. The pipe organ is at present undergoing renovation to serve us well in the future. We also have an audiovisual system which allows for services to be live-streamed.

Outside, there is a large graveyard which remains open for interment of cremated remains, and for infant burial. People from the community regularly visit their family graves. There are several Commonwealth War Graves in the churchyard.

St Anne's church



St Anne's was built as a daughter church to St Bart's, to serve the village of Lower Penn, about 150 years ago. It is a one room space with flexible seating and a simple altar area. There is a toilet and a kitchenette. St Anne's has been recently redecorated and new lighting and heating installed, creating a warm and inviting environment. St Anne's sits at the side of a country lane at the entrance to the village, so there is minimal outside space and roadside parking only, which somewhat limits how the building can be used. As well as the Sunday services, PCC meetings are held here, and also occasional weddings and baptisms.

Governance

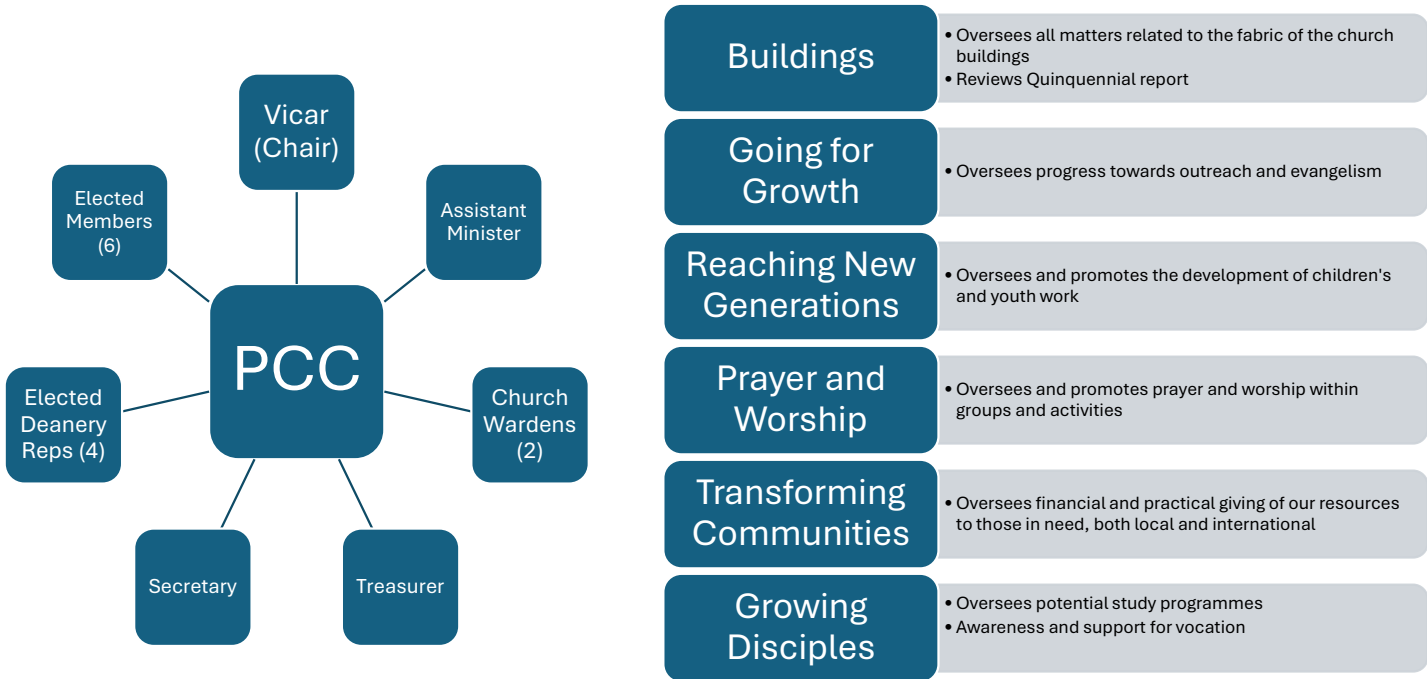
The membership of the PCC includes four Deanery representatives, two co-opted (Treasurer and Secretary), six elected members plus ex-officio members (Vicar, Assistant Minister, two Churchwardens). Wardens are elected for a period of no more than three years.

The PCC has a Parish Safeguarding Officer and employs two members of staff – a Parish Administrator and a Facilities Manager. The Junior Church leader is self-employed on an initial one year sessional basis.

The PCC meets on a bimonthly basis to review ministry, conduct formal business and pray. An annual PCC AwayDay is held shortly after the APCM to discuss the Mission Action Plan and the current diocesan strategy.

The PCC has two sub-committees. The Standing Committee comprised of Vicar, Churchwardens, Secretary, Treasurer and Deanery representative meets between PCC meetings. There is also a Finance Committee comprising the Treasurer and two lay members.

The PCC functions through its Champions based on the Grand Design of 2013. A member of the PCC champions the following – Buildings, Going for Growth, Growing Disciples, Reaching New Generations, Transforming Communities and Worship and Prayer, reporting at PCC meetings. Each Champion can be supported in their role by members of the church, and each has a distinct role descriptor.



PCC Structure

Champions on PCC



Finances

Our finances are on a secure footing and we pay our Common Fund (£60,501 in 2024) in full. We set aside 10% of our annual voluntary income to be given away, as we want to bless others with what God has given to us. As well as income from donations, fees, hire of our halls, and fundraising events, the church owns a residential property (originally purchased as a curate's house) from which we receive rental income. Our very able Treasurer is assisted by a small team.

Further details on our finances, if desired, can be viewed at the Charities Commission website, Charity No. 1132537

<https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/en/charity-search>



Our Church School

St Bartholomew's CE Primary is part of the St Bartholomew's CE Multi Academy Trust.

The church has close links with the school, including holding end of term, Harvest and Pentecost services in the church. Groups of children visit to take part in Experience Remembrance, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost which are often lay led. Our clergy visit the school to take assemblies and lead specific RE lessons and liaise with the Christian Distinctiveness adviser in the MAT. The involvement of the vicar within the life of the school, of which they are a governor, is regarded as a very important aspect of their role.



What people say about St Bart's CE Primary School

"A wonderfully caring and nurturing Christian environment"

"This school is a real treasure, significantly extending the mission of Lichfield Diocese."

[quotes from SIAMS Report, 2019]

https://www.stbartholomewsprimary.co.uk/_files/ugd/81ffab_000560fb68fa4a07a2f9d0d8913e9b12.pdf

"Pupils thrive in this wonderful school."

"Parents hold the school in very high regard."

[quotes from Ofsted Report, 2024] <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50264036> in which the school was rated Outstanding in all areas.



St Bartholomew's
&
St Anne's
Your Church, Your Family.

Music



There is a strong tradition of music at St Bart's.

There are two choirs, one for the morning service and one for evensong.

The 'Hoodie Choir', of children aged 7-11 under the direction of the Hoodie Director, leads the singing at the morning service. They leave the service to join Junior Church for a short time. The Hoodie choir has sung at Worcester Cathedral and performed concerts in the church. Children in this choir sing at weddings and, when ready, can join the evening choir. Also, as part of the church's ministry to the school a KS1 choir, The Cherubs, was established and acts as a feeder for the Hoodie choir.

The evening choir is a robed SATB choir led by the Choral Director. Choral Evensong is sung every Sunday in term time, with the choir singing a wide range of anthems and settings. The choir has sung at many cathedrals and for the past ten years has made an annual summer Choir Tour to a cathedral to sing the daily services for a week. Cathedral Tours have included Lincoln, Durham, Salisbury, and in 2024 York Minster. Choristers receive a good musical education and follow a training scheme which results in the award of various medals.

St Bart's has two organists, one for the morning service and one for evensong, who also accompany the choir on their cathedral tours.

Once a month the contemporary Worship Band takes the lead in our worship. The Band is made up of keyboard, guitarists and vocalists.

Our choir leaders and organists are all self employed.

Care for Creation

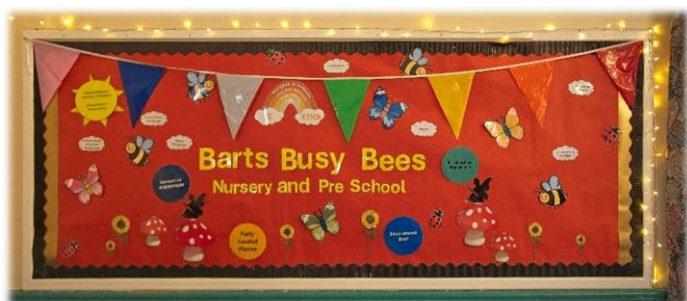
We are committed to our care for the environment as our Christian responsibility for God's creation. Our churchyard is a beautiful and peaceful natural green space and a haven for wildlife. We have already achieved the A Rocha Bronze Eco-church award, and support the Diocesan goal to work towards Net Zero Carbon, realising that there is more that could be achieved in this area.

Community Links

St Bart's has strong links with the local community. Most members live within the parish boundaries and many walk to church. The church primary school just across the road attracts families, some of which begin to attend church. In the summer the green outside is often full of children playing and parents socialising after school

Several local councillors attend services, and they hold their surgeries in the Oak Room. We have also hosted hustings for General Elections and the church hall acts as a polling station.

Our parish newsletter with details of services, other events and news is distributed to every home in the parish three times a year and also advertises local businesses.



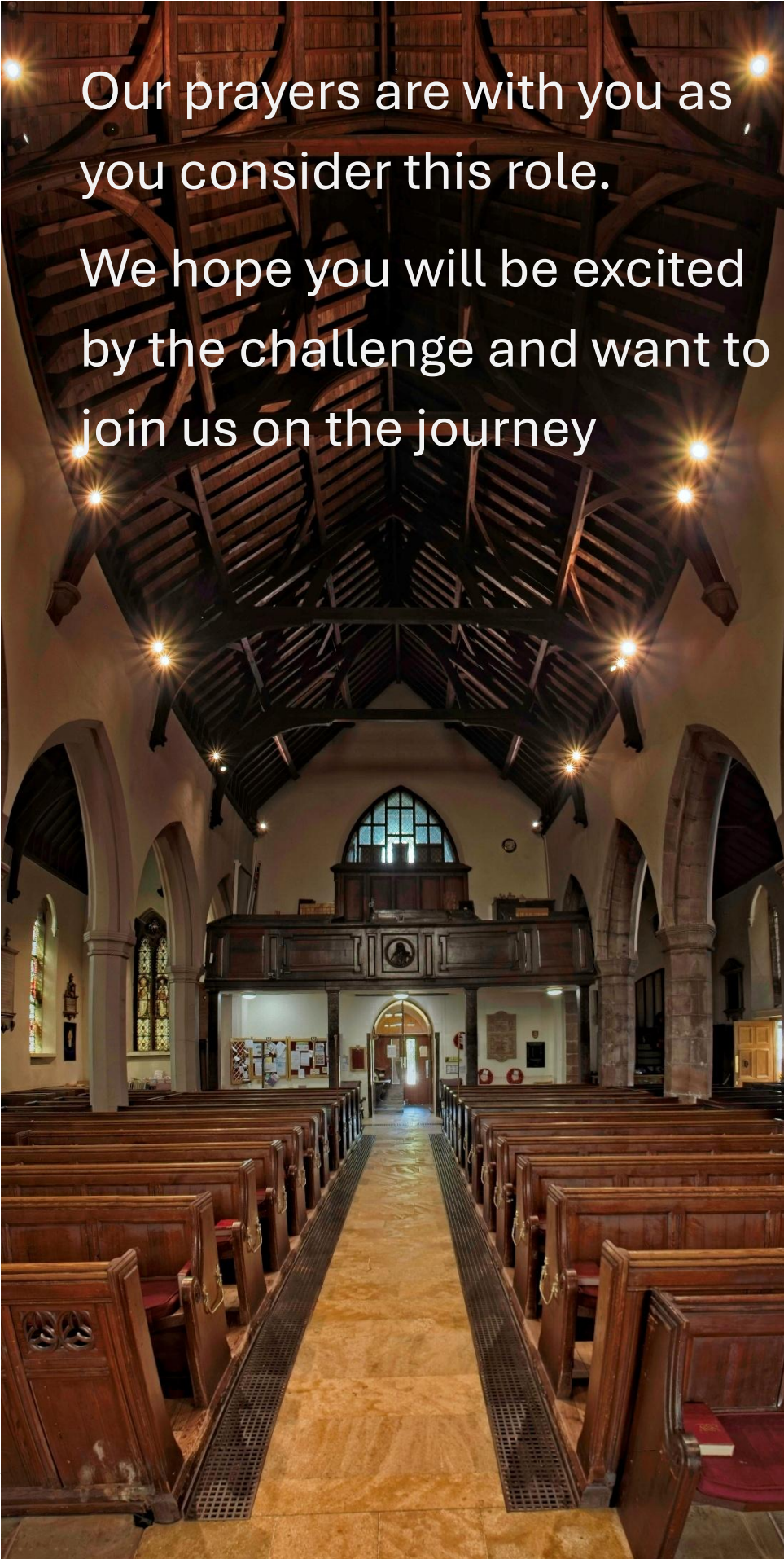
Our halls are hired out to several community groups, including various exercise classes, orchestra rehearsal, Painting in Penn art classes and annual exhibition, and the Scouts. The Busy Bees Day Nursery uses the main hall during weekdays, and it is also a venue for private parties. Interfaith Wolverhampton hires administrative space in our office.

We hold an annual Flower Festival and a Christmas Fair, both of which are well supported by the community. A monthly Farmers' Market was started in 2024.

We have a policy that 10% of our voluntary giving is donated to various charitable causes. Recent local support has been given to the Well Foodbank, The Haven Women's Refuge, Wolverhampton City of Sanctuary, Changing Lives IRIS Project, and others. Members of the congregation help as volunteers with some of these. We also have a Prayer Shawl ministry which brings together knitters from within and outside the church, who knit shawls which are then blessed and distributed to people in the community who are experiencing various life events or illnesses.



The Friends of St Barts was set up to fund raise and run social events to benefit our buildings and choir. The Penn Almhouse Charity (5 small cottages near the church) was founded in 1776 and provides low-cost housing. The Penn Wynn Bible Foundation awards bibles to Y6 pupils in the Ancient Parish of Penn and has also supported various youth projects. The Penn Poor's Land Charity awards small grants to the Vicar of St Bartholomew's and the Vicar of St Philip's Pennfields for social work. The Vicar of Penn is constitutionally obliged to be a Trustee of the above charities.



Our prayers are with you as
you consider this role.

We hope you will be excited
by the challenge and want to
join us on the journey

The PCC and
Wardens of St Bart's
and St Anne's look
forward to meeting
you and hearing more
about your gifts and
vision, and your
experience of God
and his work in you.

We hope to find an
inspirational leader
who will help us to
grow in our faith and
learn to follow Jesus
more closely.

We want to be
encouraged and
equipped to reach out
to our community and
have a greater impact
where God has
placed us.

We want to love him
and one another as he
has first loved us.



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