



**St Mary's  
Balderstone**

## Parish Profile 2026



## St Mary's Church – Who We Are



We are a church family committed to Jesus Christ and His word, to loving one another as a Christian community and to sharing the good news with those around us.

Our church is made up of people of various ages and racial backgrounds and around half of our regular worshippers have joined us in the past four years. Our attendance on a Sunday Morning averages at about 40 adults and 12 children. We are a growing fellowship, with new people regularly joining.

There are currently 51 members on the Electoral Roll, 48% of whom live in the parish.

## St Mary's Parish

St Mary's parish is located in the south of Rochdale. There is a wide range of housing within the parish, encompassing two council estates, terraced housing, and a number of new residential estates with 3, 4, and 5 bedroom detached houses.

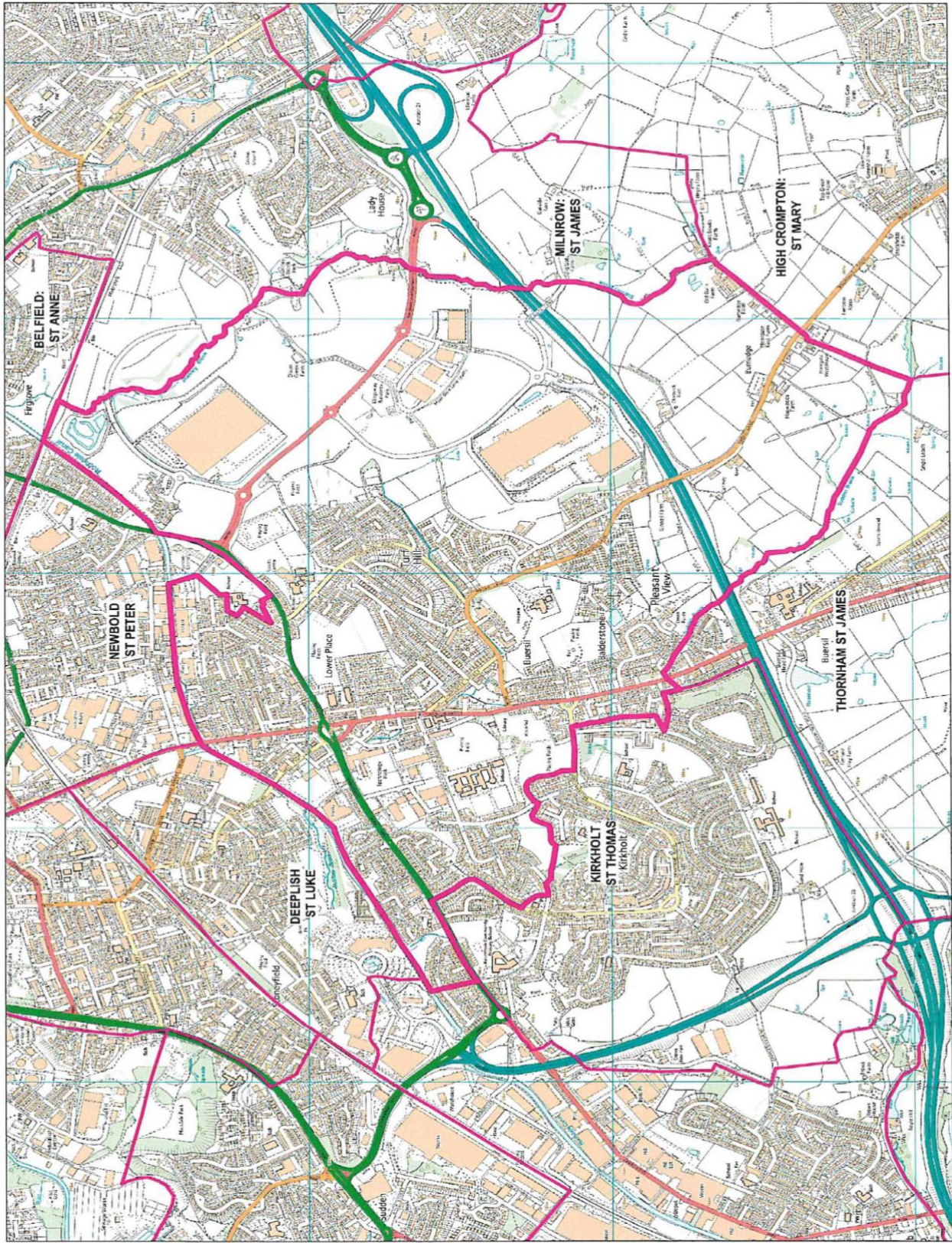
According to the 2021 census the parish population is 11,554 living in 4240 households.

Of the 12718 parishes in England it is ranked as the 694<sup>th</sup> most deprived.

There is a growing level of ethnic diversity in the parish and our church family is increasingly reflecting this diversity.



# Parish of Balderstone, St Mary (R20240)



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## Our Diocese and Partner Churches

St Mary's is in the Diocese of Manchester and although in Rochdale we are within the Oldham and Ashton Deanery. This is because we are closely linked with Christ Church and St Saviour's in Oldham, with whom we share our clergy and many of our regular activities. This arrangement has been active for the last 5 years, when we were brought together by the then bishop of Maidstone (Rt Rev Rod Thomas). Both parishes were in vacancy at the same time, and we share the same theological tradition.

St Mary's Church receives the extended episcopal oversight of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet (Rt Rev Dr Rob Munro), since our PCC has passed a resolution under the House of Bishops' Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests in order to reflect its convictions on the distinctive ministry of men and women. The PCC therefore requires that the Assistant Curate (known as the Associate Minister), along with our Incumbent (Vicar), holds that God has created men and women equal in their essential dignity and human personhood, but different and complementary in function.

Our clergy are active members of the Manchester Diocesan Evangelical Fellowship. St Mary's Church is affiliated with the Church of England Evangelical Council (CEEC) and The Alliance. We receive Alternative Spiritual Oversight from Rev'd Dr Mark Burkill, facilitated by CEEC.

## St Mary's Church Building

The parish church building is a traditional grade 2 listed building, consecrated in 1872.

The interior of the building was reordered in the 1990s, to provide a large parish room, kitchen, office and toilets; and a large open mezzanine area above with small storage rooms to the sides.

The worship area benefits from a modern heating system and an audio-visual system. It has traditional pews arranged in a semi-circle around a raised chancel area which extends into the body of the church. The seating capacity of the worship area is 200.



## Our Vision

Our vision is for St Mary's Church to be...

- **Reaching** all people with the Good News of Jesus
- **Growing** together as disciples of Jesus
- **Worshipping** God joyfully in all of life

## Our Mission

We will seek to be the church God wants us to be by...

- **Sharing the good news** with all people of different backgrounds
- **Growing in relationship with Jesus** through his word
- **Serving Jesus** with the gifts he gives us

## Our Values

As God's family we endeavour to be...

- **Outward looking**
- **Prayerful**
- **Faithful to God's word**
- **A genuine community together**
- **Living Jesus-shaped lives**

# St Mary's Church – What we believe

## The PCC of St Mary's Balderstone has affirmed the Basis of Faith of the Church of England Evangelical Council:

1. As members of the Church of England within the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church we affirm the faith uniquely revealed in the holy Scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds, of which the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion are a general exposition. Standing in the Reformation tradition we lay especial emphasis on the grace of God – his unmerited mercy – as expressed in the doctrines that follow.
2. **God as the Source of Grace** – In continuity with the teaching of Holy Scripture and the Christian creeds, we worship one God in three persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God has created all things, and us in his own image: all life, truth, holiness and beauty come from him. His Son Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, was crucified, died, rose and ascended to reign in glory.
3. **The Bible as the Revelation of Grace** – We receive the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the wholly reliable revelation and record of God's grace, given by the Holy Spirit as the true word of God written. The Bible has been given to lead us to salvation, to be the ultimate rule for Christian faith and conduct, and the supreme authority by which the Church must ever reform itself and judge its traditions.
4. **The Atonement as the Work of Grace** – We believe that Jesus Christ came to save lost sinners. Though sinless, he bore our sins, and their judgement, on the cross, thus accomplishing our salvation. By raising Christ bodily from the dead, God vindicated him as Lord and Saviour and proclaimed his victory. Salvation is in Christ alone.
5. **The Church as the Community of Grace** – We hold that the Church is God's covenant community, whose members, drawn from every nation, having been justified by grace through faith, inherit the promises made to Abraham and fulfilled in Christ. As a fellowship of the Spirit manifesting his fruit and exercising his gifts, it is called to worship God, grow in grace, and bear witness to him and his Kingdom. God's Church is one body and must ever strive to discover and experience that unity in truth and love which it has in Christ, especially through its confession of the apostolic faith and in its observance of the dominical sacraments.
6. **The Sacraments as the Signs of Grace** – We maintain that the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion proclaim the Gospel as effective and visible signs of our justification and sanctification, and as true means of God's grace to those who repent and believe. Baptism is the sign of forgiveness of sin, the gift of the Spirit, new birth to righteousness and entry into the fellowship of the People of God. Holy Communion is the sign of the living, nourishing presence of Christ through his Spirit to his people: the memorial of his one, perfect, completed and all-sufficient sacrifice for sin, from whose achievement all may benefit but in whose offering none can share; and an expression of our corporate life of sacrificial thanksgiving and service.

7. **Ministry as the Stewardship of Grace** – We share, as the People of God, in a royal priesthood common to the whole Church, and in the community of the Suffering Servant. Our mission is the proclamation of the Gospel by the preaching of the word, as well as by caring for the needy, challenging evil and promoting justice and a more responsible use of the world's resources. It is the particular vocation of bishops and presbyters, together with deacons, to build up the body of Christ in truth and love, as pastors, teachers, and servants of the servants of God.
8. **Christ's Return as the Triumph of Grace** – We look forward expectantly to the final manifestation of Christ's grace and glory when he comes again to raise the dead, judge the world, vindicate His chosen and bring his Kingdom to its eternal fulfilment in the new heaven and the new earth.

**We also uphold the following additional declarations, taken from the constitution of the Church of England Evangelical Council:**

1. We gladly proclaim and submit to the unique and universal Lordship of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, humanity's only Saviour from sin, judgement and hell, who lived the life we could not live and died the death that we deserve. By his atoning death and glorious resurrection, he secured the redemption of all who come to him in repentance and faith.
2. We acknowledge God's creation of humankind as male and female and the unchangeable standard of Christian marriage between one man and one woman as the proper place for sexual intimacy and the basis of the family. We repent of our failures to maintain this standard and call for a renewed commitment to lifelong fidelity in marriage and abstinence for those who are not married.

# St Mary's Church – What We Do

## **Sunday Worship**

Worship is held in accordance with the rules and traditions of The Church of England and is open to all who wish to attend.

A service is held every Sunday Morning at 10:30am. We use a mixture of contemporary and traditional worship songs, which we play through the A/V system.

We see children as an integral part of the church family. On Sundays at St Mary's Church we have child friendly activities and a group where children can learn about the Bible together in a relaxed and fun environment suitable for their age.

3 times a month children aged 4+ join everyone for the start of the service and then go out to Sunday School for their own time of teaching and activities. On the remaining Sundays we all join together for all-age worship.

Thanksgiving and Baptism services take place within Sunday morning worship when all the church family are present. Weddings and Funerals take place as requested throughout the year.

## **Prayer gatherings**

An informal prayer gathering is held together with members of Christ Church and St Saviour's Chadderton every Sunday evening during term time. This takes place at St Mary's once per month.

## **Growing as disciples**

We currently have three regular mid-week Bible groups: one daytime group meeting in the parish room, one evening home group and one evening group meeting on Zoom. We share materials and training for leaders with Christ Church and St Saviour's Chadderton.

Some of our young people attend a fortnightly Youth Bible Study for 14-18 year olds in Chadderton, together with young people from Christ Church.

## **Gospel Outreach**

We have a number of regular activities for the local community where we seek to share the good news of Jesus in creative ways:

- Weekly Toddler Group (SMURFS) for pre-school children and their carers.
- Monthly Outreach Coffee Morning
- Monthly Women's Breakfast
- Termly Men's Breakfast
- Occasional Afternoon Teas, Family Fun Days, Quiz Nights, and Lunches.
- We have held Easter Experience and Christmas Experience events for a number of local primary schools.

We regularly run seeker courses such as Hope Explored, Christianity Explored and Discipleship Explored. It has been wonderful to see our vision becoming a reality as a number of adults from a wide range of backgrounds have come to faith in Christ through the ministry of St Mary's in recent years.



### **Mission Partners**

We support gospel ministry amongst indigenous peoples in South America through the Church Missionary Society.

We support mission partners involved in church planting in Brussels through Crosslinks.

We also support the work of Oak Hill Bible College, Christians Against Poverty, and Tearfund.

### **Pastoral Care**

Our pastoral care team currently consists of 6 church members who assist the clergy in visiting, praying with and supporting members of the church family.

## **St Mary's Primary School**



We have very close links St Mary's Balderstone C of E Primary School, who use the church building for collective worship and other activities each week. Our church team leads collective worship every Wednesday afternoon.

The school choir and their families join us for Sunday worship around once every half term. We have seasonal celebration services for school children, families and staff during school hours four times a year.

Four members of the church fellowship serve on the school's board of governors.

## Church Finances

We constantly pay our parish share in full. Recently the PCC took the decision to pay our parish share to the Manchester Diocese through the Church of England Evangelical Council's Ephesian Fund.

We are in the fortunate position to have received in 2022 a large legacy which we apportioned in a 5 year plan to spend on:

### **A Building Project £500k**

Phase 1 to ensure the exterior of the church building is watertight and weatherproof

Phase 2 to improve the internal fabric of the building.

### **Staffing £400k**

We have already employed a church administrator, and we are looking to recruit an Associate Minister on a 3yr contract.

### **Mission Partners £75k**

We have increased to support to our mission partners, both locally and overseas.

### **Community Projects £75k**

Supporting projects within the local area.

### **Reserves £325k**

For unforeseen expenditure.

### **Summary of Accounts last 4 years.**

Year Ending Dec	2024	2023	2022	2021
Income	95203	64220	1469451	38485
Expenditure	79484	82740	72944	36267
Net Income	<b>15715</b>	<b>(18520)</b>	<b>1396507</b>	<b>3218</b>

Available Church Funds as of 31 Dec 2024: **£1,447,496**

The Parochial Church Council of St Mary's is registered with the Charity Commission.

Registration number: 1199775

Full church accounts are available on request.

## Contact Information

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**Vicar:** Rev. Ben Wilkinson  
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07878 806174

### Church

**Administrator:** Mrs Danna Saunders  
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01706 712819  
Office Hours: 9:30-12:30 Tuesday to Thursday

**Church Website:** [www.stmarysbalderstone.org.uk](http://www.stmarysbalderstone.org.uk)

**Church Facebook Page:**  
<https://www.facebook.com/saintmarysbalderstone>

**Patron's Representative:** Rt Rev Dr Rob Munro, Bishop of Ebbsfleet  
[admin@bishopofebbsfleet.org](mailto:admin@bishopofebbsfleet.org)

**Archdeacon of Rochdale:** Ven Karen Smeeton  
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