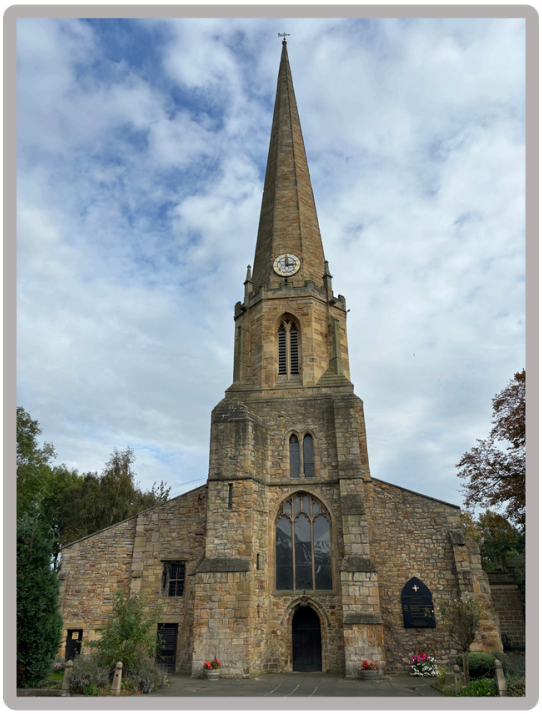
St Mary & St Cuthbert
Chester-le-Street

# Mission & Community Minister






**Parish Church & Parish Centre**
Church Chare
Chester-le-Street
County Durham
DH3 3QB
www.maryandcuthbert.org.uk

# Bishop Rick Simpson

Thank you for considering the role of Mission and Community Minister in Chester-le-Street in the Diocese of Durham. Please do think and pray about whether God is calling you to come and work with us here in the diocese, as we seek the growth of the church in every place, and the parish of Chester-le-Street, and look to the future with hope.

This is a time of both continuity and change for us in Durham. We continue to be committed to the mission of the church in every parish and place. However, we also know that to proclaim the gospel afresh involves both the renewal of traditional forms of worship and mission and the willingness to explore new approaches. We have an ongoing diocesan Transformation programme, supported by national grants, through which we are working prayerfully to see new life and growth in our parishes, expecting to see God at work through both existing patterns of worship and mission and the creation of new worshipping communities. There are many challenges here, but we are determined – by the grace of God, and through his work among us – to see the development of healthy, sustainable, mission-focussed local churches. We would expect to see such churches growing younger, challenging poverty in their communities, and engaging creatively and hopefully with environmental issues.

The Church of England is committed nationally to becoming a church of missionary disciples, and this is central to our vision in the Diocese of Durham. We are asking how our churches, schools and chaplaincies can increasingly become places where people can come to faith and grow in a journey of discipleship. We are seeking to appoint and to grow the leaders – lay and ordained – that we need to enable this.

So please pray about whether this might include you by coming to serve in Chester-le-Street and joining us to work together for the building of God's kingdom through the work of the church in this diocese.



With my very best wishes and my prayers for you in this discernment process,

Rick Simpson, Bishop of Durham

# Mission & Community Minister

St Mary and St Cuthbert's Church, Chester-le-Street has been a site of pilgrimage, prayer and mission for over 1,000 years. Founded in 883, it has a unique role in the Christian history and heritage of the Northeast, having held the body of St Cuthbert for over 100 years and as the site of the English translation of the Lindisfarne gospels. The church has been at the forefront of innovative forms of worship, mission and ministry for many years and holds an important place at the heart of the community in Chester-le-Street. Rooted within the open evangelical tradition, with a wide range of worship styles, the church is regularly used for services, school visits and occasional offices as well as welcoming visitors and pilgrims from near and far.

With one parish for a town of over 25,000 people, the church plays a significant part in many lives in the local community. The Parish Centre (a substantial building opposite the church) is a hub of activity welcoming over 1,000 people per week, a key meeting point for many local people and central to the mission and ministry of the church. The church engages in various community-focused ministries including Warm Spaces, Job Club, Bereavement Support, Litter Picking, Toddler Group and a café open Monday – Friday.

This is an exciting opportunity to join the leadership of St Mary and St Cuthbert, Chester-le-Street in the next phase of its mission and ministry. The church has a vision to be a "**multi-generational church that makes life-long disciples, where everyone flourishes**", with three values underpinning this vision:

**Christ focused:** All we do points to Christ
**Generous Hospitality:** All are welcomed, valued and known
**Growing together:** All have a place and part to play

Through its varied ministries, over 1000 members of the community engage with the church each week. However, as a church we would love to see deeper connections of discipleship and faith exploration through many of these activities.

The Mission and Community Minister will work in line with our vision and values to build upon the existing foundations of this community work, developing and strengthening missional and evangelistic opportunities. This work will be supported by an encouraging Rector, staff team and committed group of volunteers. The role comes with a significant amount of opportunity and freedom to develop ministry in Chester le Street, and we are therefore looking for someone who is prayerful, discerning, pioneering and creative.

Key duties and responsibilities:

• Be part of the core team led by the Rector, sharing general duties of leadership and ministry, including leading and preaching, pastoral care and occasional offices.
• Lead in a second chair capacity, meeting regularly with the Rector and other team members, engaging in good communicating and collaboration.
• Support and develop our ministry with baptism families from first contact and baptism preparation to sharing in the leading of baptism services and exploring continuing relationships.
• Provide a pastoral and missional presence within the Parish Centre to support faith exploration and discipleship.
• Develop communications and connections between the current ministries held within the church and Parish Centre (e.g. Warm Spaces, Job Club, Bereavement Support, Litter Picking, Café) and identify new opportunities.
• Oversee the development of the Parish Centre Café, ensuring the staff and volunteers continue to be well supported and that it continues to be a key part of our hospitality within our community building.
• Develop the connection between the church and the community through the work of the Parish Centre, building strong relationships with key stakeholders.
• Deliver and support training and courses which will support discipleship, evangelism and missional outreach throughout the church.
• Oversee the welcome of the church building, engaging church visitors and pilgrims.
• Foster an entrepreneurial and creative approach towards evangelism within the church and develop invitational evangelistic and missional initiatives around particular seasons and events.
• Assist in the recruitment of volunteers and follow safer recruitment guidelines.
• Support the work of the wider church with local schools, children and young people.

# Chester-le-Street




A market town in the North East of England with excellent transport links, including the A1(M) and the East Coast Railway Line, Chester-le-Street offers easy access to the three major cities of the North East (Durham, Newcastle and Sunderland) as well as beautiful countryside and coastline within a twenty-minute drive. The parish of St Mary and St Cuthbert covers the entire town, alongside neighbouring villages.

Our beautiful church, steeped in history remains a focal point for the community and is visible throughout the town. Chester-le-Street has a population of 25,947 (2011), and has been named in The Sunday Times as one of the best places to live in the North East. The parish is of huge social and economic contrasts with both above average home ownership and pockets of affluence as well as some of the most deprived areas in the country.





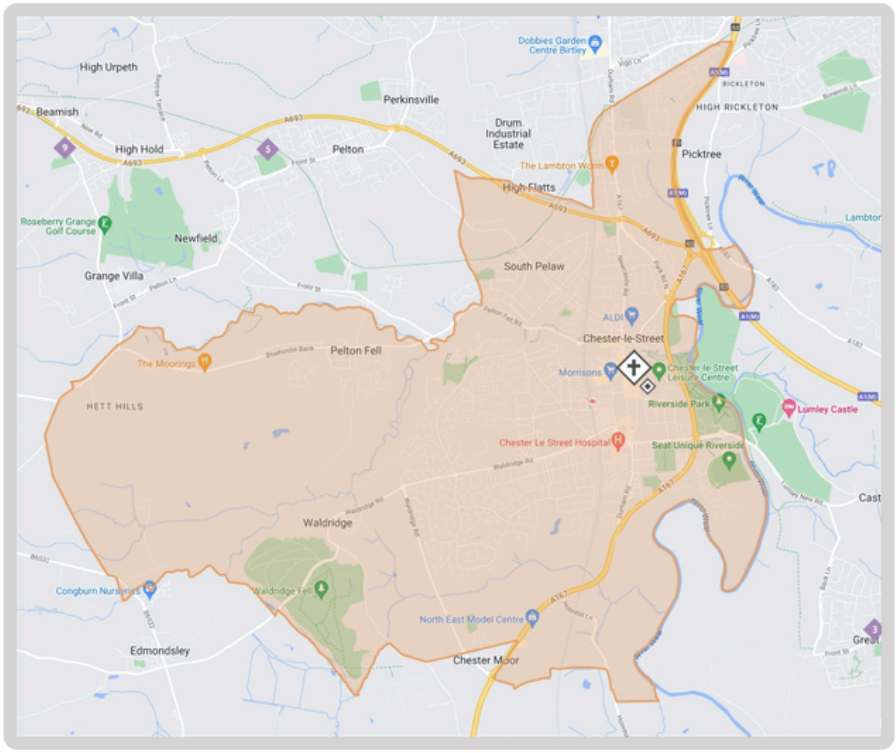




Like most towns we've seen a decline in some small businesses. However we still have a good retail sector including Tesco, Morrisons and Aldi, as well as local buisnesses and a thriving hospitality sector. We have the Emirates Riverside International cricket ground at the end of the high street, with Lumley Castle nestled in the trees just beyond. Chester-le-Street has a very popular riverside park with extensive grounds for walks, an excellent play area, splash park, football goals and a skate park. Every week the park hosts a Park Run which is very popular with local people and members of our church often help to steward the events. Other local sports facilities include a golf club, swimming pool, leisure centre, Chester-le-Street cricket ground and a number of private sport clubs.

The five primary schools and two secondary schools in our town all have a positive OFSTED ratings. Two of these schools - one primary and one secondary - are located adjacent to the main church building. We have nine residential care homes and a small community hospital. We have seven local churches within the town centre with which we have a Churches Together forum that the clergy feed in to.

The close proximity of the church and Parish Centre to the high street means that we regularly have hundreds of people walking past or nearby. Not least because a car park for the high street is located outside of the Parish Centre. This presents huge missional opportunities and connections with local people.

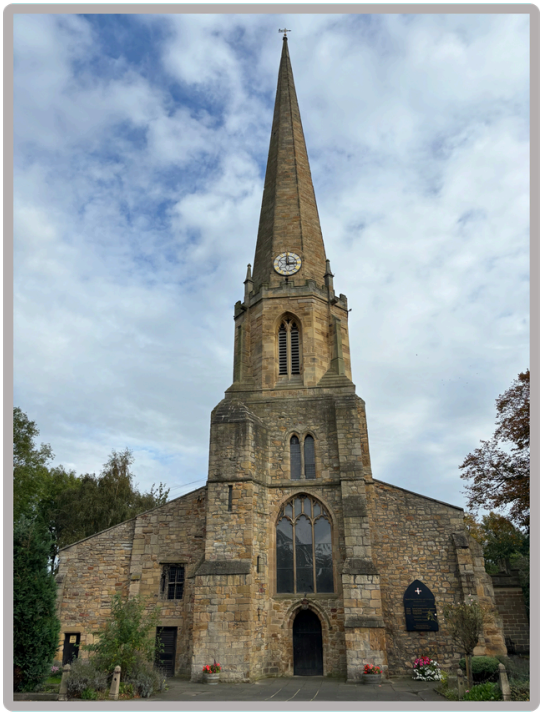



**Parish Area**

The town of Chester-le-Street including North Lodge area, and South Pelaw. Outlying communities of Chester Moor, Pelton Fell, Waldridge and Hett Hills.

| Cheseter-le-Street Census Statistics | |
|---|---|
| Population | 25,947 |
| Deprivation Rank | 3,835 |
| Number of Occupied households | 11,649 |
| Area in Square Miles | 6.1 |
| Ethnicity White | 98.30% |
| Ethnicity Asian / Black | 1.0% |
| Ethnicity Other | 0.7% |
| Religion Christian | 72.30% |
| Religion Other | 1.10% |
| Religion None | 21.10% |
| Religion Not Stated | 5.60% |

# Church





The church building is a prominent building in the town and visible for many miles. It is located just around the corner from the high street and open regularly for services, visitors and pilgrims. There is significant opportunity for further engagement with those who come through the doors, especially with visitors and locals. It is Grade 1 listed and there has been a church building here since Anglo Saxon times in 883AD. Our current building dates from the Eleventh Century but there are stones from the old Roman Fort reused in the building. This is where the body of St Cuthbert rested for over 100 years, brought for safety by monks from Lindisfarne and the original Cathedral of the Diocese. It is also the site of the English being added to the Lindisfarne Gospels and we therefore have a facsimile of the Lindisfarne Gospels in the Church Building. We are a local heritage site and on several walking and pilgrimage trails including the new Diocesan Pilgrimages of the Way of Learning and the Angel Way. It is also the starting point of the annual pilgrimage to Durham Cathedral on the nearest Saturday to St Cuthbert's Day. We love to welcome visitors and a small team of dedicated stewards enables the church building to open for some time on most days.





Part of the church is the Ankers House where Anchorites prayed in seclusion. This is now a small museum with artefacts and displays on the history of our church and town. Previously managed by the Ankers House Trust, a few years ago the church took over management of the Ankers House.





On the left of the photo above is the entrance to the Anker's House Museum. The museum is set over two floors and includes information about the church and the Anker's House, significant historical artefacts and a squint with a view into church - a particularly popular attraction.

# Services





**Sundays**
8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
9.30am Morning Worship (Liturgy from Common Worship, with a mixture of traditional hymns and contemporary worship songs. Holy Communion twice a month)
11.00am Informal Morning Worship, held in the Parish Centre (an informal service using contemporary worship, which includes groups for children, an intergenerational service once a month and Holy Communion once a month).
6.00pm Evening Worship (Sung evening prayer using Common Worship, including a choir and Holy Communion once a month)

**Weekdays**
Thursday 10.45am Holy Communion (BCP)

**Monthly**
2nd Sunday of the month, 4.00pm Messy Church
3rd Sunday of the month, 2.00pm & 3.00pm Baptisms

# Parish Centre & Ministries




The Parish Centre (over the road from the church) is a hub of community activity, with a footfall of around 1,000 people per week. It houses our parish office, two large halls, two medium sized meeting rooms, two additional offices, two smaller rooms, a café area and kitchen. We have been doing significant refurbishment works over the past year including new windows, improved insulation, reducing our reliance on gas, painting the walls and replacing the carpets. The Parish Centre is open daily and hosts a café, toddler group, warm spaces, various classes, church meetings, small groups, bereavement support and Mother's Union to name a few. Please see www.maryandcuthbert.org.uk/regular-activities for a full list. The room hire is very popular and gives the parish regular income to contribute towards the upkeep of the centre.









We have a parish office with employed administration staff. The office is open from 9am - 1pm to the public, and staffed until 4pm. Our Parish administrators are responsible for taking bookings for both the church occasional offices as well as the Parish Centre. The café has three employed staff members and numerous volunteers who help daily. We also employ a cleaner for both the Parish Centre and Church. Through this ministry of the Parish Centre, we are able to connect with and walk alongside our community. There is significant potential for this work to develop, ensuring we are not just a building for hosting community activities, but better engage those who come through our doors in a journey of faith.










The church has a wide variety of ministries that it offers, including Toddler Group, children and family activities, small groups, litter picking, Warm Spaces, CAP Job Club, Mothers' Union, Bereavement Support, Messy Church and Alpha. A significant number of occasional offices take place through the church and in 2025 there were 51 funerals, 40 baptisms and 5 weddings.

The church has connections with 5 of the primary schools and 2 secondary schools in the town, hosting school visits and services, as well as Open the Book and Collective Worship in a number of these schools. There is a particularly strong connection with the Church of England Primary School where several church members are foundation governors and there is a church presence in the school on a regular basis. As well as pastoral care for the congregation and those in the community, the church also leads worship or offers Holy Communion in six of the local care homes. As we connect with a wide variety of people through these ministries, we are hoping to develop these connections and give more opportunity to explore faith.






# Team

**Current Employed staff**
2 parish administrators 1 full time, 1 part time
3 café part time
1 Parish Centre cleaner part time
1 church cleaner part time
2 organists part time
3 vergers part time

**Future Employment Plans**
Children and Youth Worker, hoping to advertise before the end of the year. The parish has a history of employing Children and Youth Workers and alongside others, the role of mission and community minister will support but not lead on the work with children and young people.

**Clergy, Licensed and Authorised**
Rector
1 clergy with Bishop's License
3 Retired clergy with PTO
3 licensed lay ministers
3 authorised pastoral assistants
1 authorised lay minister of the word

Please see www.maryandcuthbert.org.uk/team for further details

# Housing

## 4 Bank Holt, Chester le Street, County Durham, DH2 2XJ

The housing provided for this post is a modern 4 bedroom house including a garage, spacious garden, ensuite master bedroom and conservatory.



