The Parish

The church is located to the east end of Pontefract, approximately half a mile from the town centre. Pontefract is a small market town, which is today surrounded by many housing estates. It is in the new Diocese of Leeds and the deanery of Pontefract, the parish population is around 16,000, but this is set to grow substantially.

Pontefract is situated twenty miles from Leeds and twenty-five miles from York, with approximately 32,000 inhabitants. Although historically a mining town, the last local pit has closed with consequent loss of traditional employment. Pontefract was formally also renowned for its liquorice factories, once numerous and famous for the production of Pontefract Cakes, now only two remain.

Local industry is relatively limited. There are two sweet factories in Pontefract, which mainly employ women. There is a glassworks and a chemical factory in Knottingley, which is three miles from Pontefract. There is some light industry and a large retail park at Glasshoughton, two miles away. More recently there has been a large development, on this Glasshoughton retail park, of shopping outlets and leisure facilities prompting a growth in leisure, and service industries, however employment opportunities are limited. This development, although increasing opportunities, has also caused the loss of much trade from Pontefract.

The housing within the parish varies. Some housing dates back to the beginning of the 20th century and some are very modern new estates, but the majority of the housing stock is immediately post-war. There are the Chequerfield, Monkhill and Nevison estates, initially built as council and 'pit' housing, although today much of this is privately owned. A recent resurgence in business investment and property development has resulted in new money and new blood coming in, with growth being mainly in the services industry, more middle class estates are emerging, the 2001 census indicates, of a population of 28,000, an equal split between those in professional and those in semi-skilled or manual occupations whereas, tenure of housing has a ratio of 2:1 pointing to the above indicated emergence of better paid opportunities. The community is, statistically, very predominantly white and Christian.

Pontefract is part of what is known locally as the 'Five Towns' and is regarded as the population centre for the area. It has a thriving indoor market and two outside markets per week. There is the usual mix of shopping. There are several retail parks around the town, which have increased choice in the area, although to the detriment of the town centre.

As Pontefract is situated approximately where the A1 and M62 intersect, links to other areas are relatively good. There are good public transport services around the town and to Leeds and Doncaster. It boasts three small railway stations. Pontefract is within easy driving distance of the Yorkshire Dales, the North York Moors and the east coast seaside resorts.

All Saints’ is now part of a plurality with St Giles and St Mary’s Pontefract, this opportunity gives greater scope for the two parishes to work together across Pontefract in building up congregations and reaching out to the local communities.
The Church

All Saints’ has been the parochial centre from Anglo-Saxon times. Archaeological excavations in the 1980’s revealed the footings of a Saxon church, in close proximity to the present-day church, part of which have been left exposed.

The church, on its present site, owes its existence to the close proximity of Pontefract Castle and, what was the second largest Cluniac Priory in England, St John’s Priory. Following the Battle of Hastings, in 1072, the new Norman Lord of the Manor, Ilbert De Lacy, began construction of a stone castle. The artisans and support trades camped between the castle and the ancient grave yard, on which the church now stands. The Cluniac Priors were granted permission to build a church in the graveyard, enabling them to meet the spiritual needs of the influx of trades people. This 11th century church was recorded, with its priest, in the Doomsday Book in 1086. This was the Parish church of Pontefract which covered a large geographical area.

With the building of the Castle the population of Pontefract grew rapidly and extensively, with the result that the 11th Century church was not big enough to meet need. In the 13th century work began on a much larger church, on the footprint of the old church, extensive work continued throughout the 14th and 15th century with the addition of North and South aisles and a choir, with high altar. The ruinous footprint of which still exists.

A rare Double Helix staircase, contained within the Church tower, is one of only two in the country.

In 1645 as a result of the Civil War, the Church was badly damaged. By 1649 it was a total roofless ruin which was abandoned as a place of worship, eventually St Giles took its place as the towns parish church.

After being abandoned for two hundred years, restoration of All Saints began in the 19th Century, by utilising the north and south transepts and the crossing as the church and the parish of All Saints’, Pontefract was created.

The 20th Century saw the removal of the galleries in the transepts and the medieval tracery of the West window.

In 1967, a new nave and vestry designed by Mr G. G. Pace were erected within the ruins, the internal pilasters bear medieval carvings found during the work.

In 1979, new glass was inserted in the apse, replacing damaged Victorian work.

This Century has seen extensive and ongoing restoration, including the organ and the tower, undertaken in partnership with English Heritage. The project also included an extensive internal reordering scheme, which was completed in 2003/04. The church is a Grade 2* listed building.

Much has been written about the heritage of All Saints, which makes fascinating, historical reading.

From the outside, people could be forgiven for dismissing the Church as ‘a ruin’. However, the interior provides a surprisingly warm, peaceful and welcoming environment, hosting a congregation that has seen much numerical and spiritual growth during the 13-year period of the last incumbent.

Thus, through reformation, civil war, decay and restoration, All Saints continues as a place of worship for the people of Pontefract in whose history it has played so varied a part.
Our Congregation

It has been exciting to see a real shift in the composition of our church membership over the last few years. As well as keeping the trust of our faithful, long standing church members, we are seeing an increasing number of worshippers and in particular young families. We continue to be blessed by the ministry with children and teenagers, and endeavour to welcome them into our corporate worship, in creative ways.

Churchmanship

The church is seen as Central Plus and the church is used by all classes for worship, which currently appeals to all ages and tastes, services range from traditional Eucharist and Evensong, to child friendly worship and modern praise accompanied by modern instruments. Most now describe the church tradition as being ‘middle of the road’, open, friendly and available to all.

Pattern of Services

There are currently three services on a Sunday and one Wednesday morning communion service, the majority of which are traditional and taken from Common Worship

8am. This is a said Communion Service, without music. Common Worship.
10am. 1st Sunday in the month is a Eucharistic, Family Orientated Service, shortened to 40 minutes. The remaining Sundays being Said Eucharist Services. All these services are accompanied by a mix of pipe organ music and a worship group.
6.30 p.m. 1st Sunday Communion - Common Worship
Remaining Sundays Evensong/Evening Prayer – Common Worship. All these services are accompanied by pipe organ music.

Attendances average 140+ over the 4 services offered weekly,
8am. Said Eucharist (older people) =15,
10 am. Eucharistic and Family Worship (infant to 90+) = 90,
6.30pm. Evening service (mixed adult) = 20. services
9.30am Wednesday Eucharist (mixed adult) = 15.

Occasional Offices

Average annual Baptisms, last 3 years = 100 with 13% being adults.
Average annual total Funerals., last 3 years = 54
Average annual weddings, last 6 years = 18.
Average annual confirmations, last 5 years = 19.

Electoral Roll

As at 1st January 2017, the electoral roll number was 94, with approx. 55% living in the parish.
Many of the non-residing members actually live in the town of Pontefract
Other Churches.
Within the town of Pontefract there are two other Anglican churches, In the town centre, St. Giles’, which is High and Traditional, and St. Michael's in Carleton which is Traditional.

The plurality of All Saints’, Pontefract with St Giles and St Mary’s came into effect in March 2017

Christian Churches of other denominations in the town include:
1 Quaker, 2 Methodist, 1 Congregational, 1 Roman Catholic, 1 Salvation Army.

Churches Together
There is a 'Churches Together' initiative in the town of Pontefract, which is represented by all the churches, with the exception of the Congregational Church who prefer to be independent.

Finance
The Parish Accounts are available

English Heritage
Through funding from English Heritage, we have completed the tower repairs, repaired the south transept roof and completing other exterior work. Funding is available from Historical England to continue with consolidation of the ruins.

Planned Giving
In addition to the weekly collections, there are a number who give by standing order. The level of giving is currently showing a decrease

Parish Share
The Parish Share is £53,393

Pastoral Assistance available to a new Associate Priest

• This is a training Parish and there is currently a part time non-stipendiary Assistant Priest,
• There is a Distinctive Deacon
• 1 Reader in training
• 2 other Lay people in training
• 2 Churchwardens, and several Sides people who are very committed

• A team of Crèche supervisors led by 2 former teachers
• 13 members of the congregation are currently licensed to administer the Chalice.

• Worship music team, including organist, keyboard player, drummer, guitarist and regular vocalists.

• The Plurality has created the opportunity of working with colleagues across the town of Pontefract.

• 4 local clergy and several retired clergy are available to assist.

The present clergy undertake occasional chaplaincy work at Pontefract Hospital, the local Hospice and residential homes in the parish

**Church groups**

• ALPHA courses (with planned house groups arising from same).

**Church Hall**

We have a modern building, built in 1997. This is a valuable resource for both the Church and the community. The church hall is currently being utilised as a base for Saviour Trust operation, which generates a sizeable and regular income for the church.
Pastoral Ministry in the parish

Residential Homes in the Parish
Willow Park Care Home
Priory Gardens Nursing Home
Stella House Nursing Home
Trees Nursing Home
Millfields Nursing Home

Schools in the Parish
St Giles’ Church School
Orchard Head Junior and Infant
Cherry Tree Academy, Junior and Infant
De Lacy Junior
Chequerfield Infants
Harewood Nursery
St Michael's Holy Family

Other areas of pastoral ministry

Saviour Trust
During 2006/7, All Saints began experiencing many people coming to the church to seek help because of homelessness, drug related issues and alcohol dependency, of which the majority were ex-offenders. The Saviour Trust, as a registered charity was set up during this time by All Saints Church, in response to an evident need for housing and support for the homeless and those at risk of becoming homeless. The Charity aims to offer immediate and sustainable support through the provision of housing, information, advice and guidance, pastoral care and positive activities. In 2016, it was decided to separate the Charity, for management purposes

From 2007 to 2017 The Saviour Trust has increased its housing stock to 76 properties which are situated in four local areas Pontefract, Knottingley, Featherstone and Castleford and accommodate approximately 160 people. The Saviour Trust continues to work in partnership with housing agents, government agencies as well as drug and alcohol advisory bodies. This is so the Trust and its partners can keep offering to the most vulnerable in society a vital support network while providing suitable housing for them.

The Saviour Trust Aims:
To resolve the housing problem for the homeless in Pontefract and surrounding areas.
To provide information, advice and guidance, drop-ins, food parcels and positive activities to all service users.
To work alongside local authorities to maintain properties to a certain standard in keeping with our 'Responsible Landlord' status with WMDC
To work with all tenants to strive towards positive moves, gaining employment, family reconciliation and rehabilitation back into the community

Also
Communion is celebrated once a month in 5 Residential Homes, plus other occasional pastoral needs.

Home Communion is taken on a regular basis to those unable to attend church

Visits are arranged to those who are sick or in Hospital
Distribution of food parcels, in conjunction with St Giles Church/Christian Aid

Church Social Activities

Members of the congregation meet regularly to share in a fellowship meal together, usually in a local tavern, this is open to all and has an average attendance of 45.

Pilgrimage to Walsingham.

The Congregation have enjoyed several pilgrimages to Walsingham in recent years, The National Pilgrimage is a particular favourite
Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

In 2015, clergy led 12 pilgrims on a twelve-day Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, which was based on the shore of the Galilee and in central Jerusalem, visits were made to many Holy Sites.

Pilgrimage to Holy Island

In 2017, a small group from the congregation will join an Area Diocesan pilgrimage to Holy Island

Support for Missions and Charities

- The Parish sets aside at least 10% of its income for mission support.
- Support for other missions, both at home and abroad are identified - e.g. Hands at Work, Saviour Trust
- Local charities are funded from revenue made from refreshments.
The Vicarage
The Vicarage is located opposite the Church, and situated on a main road. It is a modern type detached house, centrally heated. It has 4 bedrooms with upstairs bathroom and separate shower room. Downstairs, there is a good size lounge, a dining room, kitchen and toilet. The study is separate and can be accessed without invading the privacy of the rest of the house. The house enjoys a pleasant, south facing rear garden. There is a secure garage adjacent to the rear garden.
**Potential developments for the life of the church**

The needs of the Parish can make the Pastoral load quite heavy. This is an area where there is potential for identifying ‘gifting’ and increased lay involvement, i.e. Baptism Preparation course; supporting those experiencing bereavement and loss. There is also scope for a wider lay involvement in the leading of worship.

Over recent years there has been a considerable amount of growth within the church. A good proportion of the congregation have discovered a living faith and have a desire to deepen their walk with God. This is an area where there is considerable scope for nurture and encouragement.

The Church has worked hard to develop its relationship with local schools, and has for many years employed a dedicated schools worker, however due to the ordination of the schools worker during interregnum, that close contact has been difficult to maintain. This is an area which has enormous scope for renewal of Schools work.

**Vision Statement**

- To deepen the personal faith of church members and increase their commitment
- To nurture new Christians
- To address issues relating to relationships and family life
- To build on our already strong links with local schools and the wider community
PROFILE OF NEW ASSOCIATE PRIEST

The Parish would welcome either male or female applicants

Qualities and attributes

CHURCHMANSHIP
   As this is an Evangelical Parish we would hope for a priest who Eucharistically centred and sacramentally minded

LEADERSHIP
   have collaborative skills and work collaboratively with our Vicar and other clergy
   ability to recognise ‘gifting’ and shared ministry within the laity, and promote this

TEACHER
   faithful to the Word of God, prayerful, and led by the Holy Spirit

PASTORAL CARE
   to be a pastor and encourage a healing ministry
   to encourage ‘every member ministry’ in pastoral care

COMMUNITY FOCUS
   build on ministry in schools, old people’s homes and ‘Churches Together’ with increasing involvement of the whole church family

VISION
   moving church on spiritually and with a heart for mission

YOUTH
   to build on youth and schools work and embrace young people and teenagers in our church worship

WORSHIP
   open to ‘renewal’ within our worship as well as giving opportunities for ‘tradition’ — recognising the needs of all.

MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION
   ability to cope with the demands of a busy parish