

Kings Norton Team Ministry: Profile at April 2010

Who we are

Kings Norton is a Church of England Team Parish of 28,300 on the southern edge of Birmingham. Outer city urban and suburban, it also has a rural area with farming - and sheep. Most people live in estate areas of the parish with multiple deprivation and disadvantage; Druids Heath, Chaddesley/Longfellow and the Three Estates New Deal for Communities area of Pool Farm, Primrose and Hawkesley. The area around Kings Norton Green forms a significant local focus for the whole parish. It has Birmingham's largest collection of medieval buildings, including the parish church, our open churchyard and the Old Grammar School and Tudor Merchant's House, re-opened in June 2008 as Saint Nicolas Place after winning BBC Restoration 2004. These are all church-owned and in heavy and growing church, heritage, community and education use.

Hawkesley Church Primary School (C/E – Methodist Aided, N.o.R 310) is our church school, with a strong place in the past and future of its estate community. It is preparing for major change and growth.

We are involved in:

- Many pastoral offices, which draw out a growing range of mission and ministry.
2008: 85 baptisms, 73 marriages, 210 funerals (87 in church)
2009: As 2008, but rise in the number of funerals held in church
- Many local schools and organisations. There are eleven primary schools (two RC) including Hawkesley Church Primary School, three secondary schools (one RC) and Cadbury FE College.
- Major estate regeneration programmes – most still to deliver fully
- Support for a significant number of isolated elders, vulnerable people and pressured families

Kings Norton is a “mixed economy” parish. It is large and, though majority white (BME 11%), is socially highly diverse. Around 8000 people live in the more prosperous area around The Green. 20,000 live in decaying out-city estates, including 6000 on Druids Heath and 9,500 on the “Three Estates” area of Hawkesley, Primrose and Pool Farm. Many, young and old, have experience of hurt and struggle. Many feel unsafe and vulnerable - and we take too many funerals of young people. Yet, as in the area's major regeneration programmes, the restoration of the church's other mediaeval buildings and in the life of the schools and communities in which we minister – including our outer-estate church school – there is great capacity and longing for hope, renewal and growth and a willingness, against all the odds, to work together with others.

Within all this, St Nicolas is the ancient parish church in the fullest sense. It is highly visible. It is widely known and woven into the stories of so many, often very vulnerable, people. Liturgy and prayer are at the heart, but, in our local context and story, St Nicolas is much more than a theatre for liturgy or a place for praying where it has been valid for centuries, vital though these are.

The building itself, with its many and growing uses, is a living sign of Christ's shelter, hope and welcome at the heart of our growth in mission across the parish and through our District Churches of Hawkesley and Immanuel. We are now beginning to re-order so that our generous building can be even more accessible and responsive to growing varieties of worship, use and need.

Our Mission Statement:

We seek together:

- to be a worshipping transforming partnership in Christ
- to live out God's radical hospitality for all
- to be equipped for work in God's world

We are also committed to the Diocesan **Transforming Church** Programme

Transforming Worship:	<i>Drawing us into the presence of the Living God</i>
Transforming Relationships:	<i>Finding healing, encouragement and challenge through our life together</i>
Transforming Discipleship:	<i>Enabling us to grow as confident followers of Jesus</i>
Transforming Leadership:	<i>Releasing and harnessing the gifts of all God's people</i>
Transforming Presence:	<i>Living out God's love in our communities and the wider world</i>
Transforming Outreach:	<i>Leading others to believe in Jesus and belong to his Body</i>
Transforming Partnerships:	<i>Working together with people of goodwill to see God's purposes fulfilled</i>

The Team Ministry

The Team Ministry was formed in 1974, in response to massive post-war outer estate developments, with Team Rector responsible for St Nicolas and Team Vicars licensed to newly created estate congregations. This has however become less helpful. St Nicolas has grown as the focus of whole-parish ministry, requiring us all to work closely in partnership. The district churches of Hawkesley and Immanuel continue in vital local ministry but do not require a full time priest.

In 1999, the Team was reduced to three stipendiaries. We have since developed a new Team with *collegial* responsibility for the whole parish, rather than separate district responsibilities. We are we believe called to work in full partnership in the Gospel, with lead responsibilities for whole parish ministry and mission shared within the Team rather than in former patterns of delegation and separation.

Team members share fully with colleagues in prayer, in preparation and conduct of worship, in mission and pastoral responsibilities, in occasional offices across the parish and in enabling and supporting lay gifts, including the resource ministries of churchyard and building care, hospitality, administration, finance and communication. We each have commitment and accountability to God, to one another, to lay ministers and leaders and to the whole people of God. When we do this, God's mission grows. When we don't, it falters.

Within this, lead responsibility in Team and parish for our Mission Statement and Transforming Church is:

Rector: A worshipping, transforming partnership in Christ - **Enriching Worship, Presence and Partnerships**

Team Vicar: Being equipped for work in God's world - **Enriching Discipleship and Leadership**

Team Priest: Living out God's radical hospitality for all - **Enriching Relationships and Outreach**

Our vision

There are many dividing lines in church life, in local life – and in each person's journey of faith. At the heart of mission must be deep commitment to partnership which enables people to become confident in who they are as human beings in Christ, so that dividing lines can be transformed from barriers into thresholds of new life and meeting with God and with others who are different – in both church and wider communities.

Transforming our mission, staffing and buildings serves and deepens this to enable connections: between each area and each resident of the parish with God, each other and with the wider church and region; between St Nicolas and the Team's District Churches; between St Nicolas and its immediate context of churchyard, newly restored mediaeval community buildings and The Green; between the different areas and uses within the parish's buildings; between different stances on current wider church issues; crucially between past, present and future in Christ. Within all this, we gather a wide range of church tradition and worship style in strong commitment to go on living and growing together.

We pray to go on growing in God's mission in a diverse and challenging parish, in building confident lay ministries and in making hard choices, with lively trust in God's grace in all that cannot yet be seen or done. It is much bigger than any one of us. We have to learn each day to do that which by grace we can and let God and his people do the rest.

We are aware of being but stewards of the rich parish church story of Kings Norton and seek:

- To embrace great diversity of tradition, social context, worship and theology
- To discover new growth of lay gifts in worship, pastoral care, hospitality and outreach
- To break new ground in mission partnership with others in and beyond the parish
- To grow in faith, in ministry, in learning and in nurture for all
- To grow in prayer and action in local community regeneration
- To renew buildings and resources to make them safe, useful and lively
- To be renewed for growth as the people of God in and for this place

We have much to discover and do in all these. They are very much work in progress and bring risk, challenge and opportunity. We therefore seek to grow as people who can live with the provisional, who want to discover more and who want to listen, pray and work with others; sometimes leading, sometimes learning, yet always in faith that God's mature purpose and promise for the growth of his church require more attention to what joins and knits us together in Christ than to what makes us different. Thus we affirm and grow in seeing our rich differences as "gifts to be offered and nourished, rather than positions to be defended."

Worship in the parish

We gather in at least five different times and places on a normal Sunday and increasingly during the week. Every gathering has a strong emphasis on inclusion and hospitality in worship as ground for mission with much sharing of food, prayers, laughter, tears and a wide variety of music.

Hawkesley LEP, Immanuel District Church and Hawkesley Church Primary School are each crucial to our growth in local ministry and mission.

We are committed to collaboration in ministry, so that the many different expressions of church in the parish can affirm and support each other as one Body together, cherishing the old, embracing the new and looking for God's growth through the wide range of contacts and relationships, existing and potential, which we have with those who are not yet active church members. We have discovered much in this and are committed to discovering more, especially in the growth of lay gifts.

St_Nicolas, the parish church for 900 years, is in daily use, offering generous and welcoming space to sustain a breadth of worship and new growth in creative liturgy, prayer, music and lay responsibility. Current ASA is 151. Sunday services are 8am (BCP Communion), 10.30am (Common Worship Sung Communion) and 6pm Evening Worship. On the second Sunday of each month, 10.30am worship is an All Age/Parade Service (usually non-Eucharistic) with Matins at 11.45am. The 6pm service has varied formats over the month. These include a monthly Eucharist with Prayer for Healing, Night Prayer and Evening Worship, (CW or BCP) which draw on Taizé, Iona and other contemporary and ancient resources. Taizé Worship is offered every month.

Baptisms, marriage and funerals bring an additional 25,000 people each year. Within all these, and with new growth in Open Church, Candlelit Church and Tiny Tots, the church building provides a prayerful shelter for growing numbers in which fresh encounters with God and his church are able to flourish, not least for many who have been alienated or wounded by earlier faith experience.

Hawkesley, (ASA 20-25), offers Common Worship and modern Methodist worship at 10.30 service each Sunday at Hawkesley School. Its worship and ministry is shared with the Methodist Circuit through the Revd Donald Sampson, its Methodist Minister and valued colleague, and includes weekday church and community activities, daily School Breakfast Club and strong Guiding groups.

Immanuel has grown strongly in lay leadership in worship, local mission and pastoral care with an able music group and imaginative use of Audio and Visual Aids. Worship takes place in the Fairway Day Centre each Sunday at 10.30 am (ASA 40-50) and over the course of a month will include Holy Communion, Service of the Word and All Age Worship.

Former worship centres on Druids Heath and Pool Farm estates have closed. We now seek other ways than Sunday morning for being missional church in and for them. We have a good relationship with a small independent church plant on Pool Farm. On Druids Heath we seek a growing informal partnership with members of the Churches of Christ. Weekly prayer meetings have begun.

St Nicolas Churchyard (c.30 burials each year) is a cherished and well-used green space for all.

Team Staff

In post are Canon Rob Morris (Team Rector from 1999), the Revd Dr John White (Team Vicar from January 2010), the Revd Jayne Crooks (Team Priest from November 2008) and the Revd Rebecca Pullin (Curate from July 2007). There are two Readers, Mrs Fay Fearon (licensed 2005) and Mrs Ruth Howman (2007). Other valued team members are the Revd Donald Sampson, part-time Methodist minister at Hawkesley and part-time Parish Administrators and Director of Music. Together we bring a wide experience of church, world and, with Wycliffe, Queen's and Mirfield in our training, of Church of England life. With lay leaders, we share in developing the prayer, worship, ministry, mission, teaching and neighbourhood pastoral care of the Church of England for all ages throughout the parish, in ways which we pray are faithful, inclusive, bold, distinctive, appropriate to context and complementary to the ministry and mission of the whole.

2008/9 Team Review Findings

1. We serve a complex and dynamic parish with huge potential - and much to risk in faith. The review clearly shows both the potential and the risk. We must not take either for granted.
2. Collegiality in clergy and lay ministries is vital for the flourishing of each part and the whole, especially in the renewal of mission and ministry in the outer estate areas and in St Nicolas's growing weekday ministry.
3. The "centre" of clergy Team and lay leaders, St Nicolas and Parish Office needs fresh emphasis and re-shaping to serve growing common vision and tasks and every part of our Parish/Team life so each thrives together and in their own distinctive ways.