

The Parish of Salwarpe and Hindlip with Martin Hussingtree

Please visit our website (www.shmhchurches.com) - It gives a good idea of who we are and what we do.

Background

In 1997 the United Benefice of Salwarpe and Hindlip with Martin Hussingtree became a combined parochial parish with two churches: Salwarpe and Martin Hussingtree. As both are dedicated to St Michael, they are referred to locally by their place names rather than their Saints. The church of St James at Hindlip was declared redundant and its care transferred to West Mercia Police at Hindlip Hall by way of a 100 year lease from the Diocese.

In 2009 and with the retirement of the previous incumbent we were allocated a third of an associate priest's time from the Droitwich Parish Team to act as our Priest-in-Charge. We believe this has worked well on both sides. It has allowed us to operate as a separate parish but, at the same time, to get to know the Ministry Team in Droitwich and the members of their parish.

Local Area

If you click on the 'Visitors' button on the website you will find a Google map of the parish showing how it abuts Droitwich and runs down to the outskirts of Worcester. There is a local bus service along the A38 into Droitwich and Worcester from where there are train services to Birmingham, London and beyond. The M5 Motorway runs through the edge of the parish for communication to Birmingham or down to Bristol and the West Country. The Cotswolds and other scenic country, including the Malvern Hills, are close at hand.

The parish is generally rural, but has urban attachments in Fernhill Heath and the southern outskirts of Droitwich. The present population of around 1500 households is expected to increase significantly in the next couple of years with the approval to build 750 houses on fields adjoining the Parish of Droitwich.



The heart of Salwarpe is around the church, Salwarpe Court and the Village Hall. Together with a farm and twelve households they form a rural hamlet by the river and canal. The main population lives in a more recent residential area, just inside the civil boundary of Droitwich Spa.

Martin Hussingtree church is the focal point for a rural community including Hindlip and a part of Fernhill Heath, which has a school, post office, shop, Memorial Hall, sheltered accommodation for the elderly, a number of small businesses, a Baptist Church and three pubs. The old parish of Hindlip is sparsely populated but links with its redundant church and West Mercia Police are maintained through the Police Chaplain. Two parish services are held here during the year: the Patronal of St James and Remembrance Sunday.



Outreach

The Parish and Community Magazine - Despite the scattered nature of the Parish, a monthly magazine is hand delivered to every one of some 1500 households free of charge.

The church website - www.shmhchurches.com.

Weekly Pew Sheet - Includes the diary of Parish events and church notices for the coming week, and is distributed at the services and displayed on the Church Notice Boards.

Local Ministry Team

SHMH was one of the first parishes in the diocese to have an authorized Lay Team. Over the years this has now evolved into a small Local Ministry Team consisting of four lay members and led by the Priest-in-Charge. The aims of the LMT are primarily to support the work of the priest. They assist in the organisation and running of church services, and endeavor to enable others to find and develop their ministry. They also strive to promote spiritual development and learning within the parish and provide support to those in need of pastoral care.

One of the members of the Team is also responsible for arranging home communion visits, either by himself with reserved sacraments or by the Priest.

Salwarpe Fete – There is a strong community spirit and much goodwill towards the churches and a desire to keep them open for future generations. Whilst this may not manifest itself in large congregations, it does result in an annual church fete, which has become a major community event. In 2013 we welcomed some 1,500 adults as well as many children and raised £13,000 for the maintenance of the two churches.

Hindlip CE First School - Is situated in the heart of Fernhill Heath. It has been declared outstanding by both Ofsted and the Anglican school Inspectors. The Governing body includes a member of the PCC and the Priest-in-Charge. Excellent links have been established over many years. Together with the Baptists we offer 'Open the Book' every week and Salwarpe Church provides the setting for their Harvest and Easter services and their leavers' party at the end of the year.

Christingle Service - This popular service fills Salwarpe Church each year with families. It is followed by tea and mince pies in the Village Hall.

Fund raising events – Besides our annual fete there are a number of small events often combined with another charity. Last year saw a Frog Race Night with Hindlip PTA, a Quiz evening with St Richard's Hospice and a slide show with Save the Children.

Open Churches - Salwarpe Church is now open every day during daylight hours. Its proximity to the canal towpath makes it a popular route for walkers. The last few summers have seen us open for teas on two weekends and we are still looking at ways in which we can attract these churchyard visitors.

Martin Hussingtree Church is open at weekends from Easter to Harvest. The church has the advantage of an adjacent car park, and we have been experimenting with coffee mornings and a plant sale to encourage contact with the wider community.

Churches, congregation and worship

To appreciate the nature of the parish, it is best to click on our website. www.shmhchurches.com . This describes the two parish churches and the services currently provided. From this you will see that we try to cater for the preferences of our congregations, some of whom prefer The Book of Common Prayer, and some a more modern form of service. On most Sundays we have one service at each church.



We are very aware that the average age of our congregations and of most of our helpers is uncomfortably high. Like many other parishes, we have failed to attract the younger members of our community to our services and so we are trying, for the first time this autumn, a new form of worship - 'Doing it Different', aimed specifically at young families who may have made contact through Baptisms.

Planting snowdrops for Queen's Diamond Jubilee - 2011

Statistics

There were 106 names on the Electoral Roll on 31st March 2013 – an increase of 8 on 2012. During the last year ASA has been 47 . There were 5 weddings and 9 funerals including those at the Crematorium. There were 13 Baptisms. Very early days, but so far 'Doing it Different' does appear to be proving popular with our young families. Attendance at the main festivals was as in the table below.

	Adults	Children
Easter	94	
Harvest	59	7
Christingle	95	40
Christmas Eve	83	
Christmas Day	48	4

Fabric and Finance

By clicking the 'Contact' button, you can view the latest Annual Reports and Accounts.

The finances of the parish are in a healthy state as a result of a long-established 'Planned Giving' (mostly attracting valuable Gift Aid), and regular fund raising events. The Parish Share is generally paid in full. Both churches now have kitchen and toilet facilities and well-lit paths. The fabric of both churches is in good repair and the 8 bells at Salwarpe were refurbished and rehung some years ago. Items pointed out as requiring attention in the short term, at the last Quinquennial inspection (2011), have already been largely dealt with.

What we are seeking.

Although we have two churches we are very much one congregation with a strong community spirit. We like to think we are a vibrant, developing parish, adapting to the rapidly changing church. The proposed housing development will bring new challenges. We are seeking a priest who is outward-looking, who will enable us to move forward, but will also encourage us in our worship through his or her knowledge of scripture.