



Welcome

to

**St Nicholas Church,
Boldon**

Parish Profile

2008

Church Web Site : www.stnicholas-westboldon.org.uk

St Nicholas Church Boldon



A Saxon Foundation

Where and who we are

The village of West Boldon is situated between the cities of Sunderland, Newcastle and the town of South Shields and on the A184 main Sunderland to Newcastle Road. In distance terms we are set approximately 4 miles from Sunderland, 8 miles from Newcastle and 4 miles from South Shields and in the South Tyneside Metropolitan District of the County of Tyne and Wear. Our parish is in the Jarrow Deanery and in the Diocese of Durham.

Boldon and the surrounding area is designated as Green Belt and the residents of the Boldons are very keen to keep development within green belt requirements. Many people come to Boldon for the shopping and the cinema in a purpose built complex.

Our Parish and Church A Brief History

Our Grade 1 listed parish church sits in a village on a hill overlooking the River Don. The church was built in its present form in the 13th century, remaining largely unaltered since then. Recent archaeological investigations have indicated there was a Saxon church predominantly of timber on the location of the present building. Our church sits over this Saxon Foundation.

Over the years and centuries the people of Boldon have worshipped and witnessed here and the tradition continues amongst the faithful who guard this heritage.



Since AD 1220 the stones from the quarry nearby have stood in their gothic shape, bearing witness to God's presence in our midst, the finger-like spire pointing us to God.

Our typically Early English church contains many interesting features, reminding us of its history over the centuries.

The village was here before the present church but in 1183 it was shaped for another kind of witness, when the Normans created the County Palatine of Durham. Hugh Pudsey became Prince Bishop at its head having the powers equivalent of a local king.



His first initiative was to make a detailed inventory of all that had been acquired and the conditions of service in which each tenancy was held. This became known as the "Boldon Buke" which describes the shape of life in the village and the social and economic life in the wider region. West Boldon, as it is now called, has expanded from its original boundaries to a population of around 5000.

Boldon had been largely an agricultural community but now has increased housing and industrial development including a thriving business park.

The Church and People

The Sunday Services

We offer two communion services on a Sunday and Evensong on the first Sunday of the month for a nucleus of 75 to 100 worshippers.

The 8.00am Service.

The Book of Common Prayer is used at 8.00am with between 12 and 15 regular communicants and this is a said service.

This early morning service remains one of our most cherished assets allowing flexibility of our congregation to choose their pattern of worship requirements.

The 11.00am Service.

Our main Sung Eucharist using Common Worship takes place at 11.00am with Reader, Organist, Choir, and Servers in attendance. The average number of communicants is between 40 and 50.

The sermon is usually preached at every 11.00am service from the pulpit or the chancel steps unless other special occasions require a different approach.

Baptisms are usually held at this service to emphasise the welcome into the church family.



Sung Evensong at 6.00pm

Evensong is one of the most uplifting services of the day, with its poetry and liturgy.

We use The Book of Common Prayer with its traditions, beautiful language and liturgy which are the Church of England. Evensong is sung, as well as the psalm appointed for the day. Our Reader leads this service including a short address.

During Lent we include the Stations of the Cross and process to each station with singing and the spoken word.

Weekdays and Holy Days of Obligation

We are very proud of our commitment to maintain our Wednesday morning Eucharist at 9.30am. It is a said service using Common Worship and up to 9 faithful communicants attend.

During the season of Lent we have a service of Compline every Wednesday at 7.30pm with a talk or meditation.

Our Holy Week services start on Monday at 7.30pm with the Eucharist and continue through to Maundy Thursday which includes The Stripping of the Altar and the Watch of the Passion.

Good Friday is a 3 hour devotion commencing at 12 noon including silent prayer, Stations of the Cross and the Good Friday Liturgy.

The Easter Vigil takes place on Saturday night with the blessing of the Paschal Candle and Service of Light.

Our Patronal Festival for St. Nicholas on the 6th December is always well attended with an evening Sung Eucharist. This is followed by faith supper in our Parish Hall and a visit from Santa Claus who gives us all a gift.

Our first Christmas Service is held on Christmas Eve commencing at 7.30pm. This has one of the best attendances of the year from church members as well as those past members who

have left the parish and the area, returning for the celebrations.

Our Carol Service is again well attended and the tradition is to celebrate when the season of Christmas officially begins after Christmas Day.



Our Congregation

We see our church as the focal point for the village of West Boldon and although most of those on our electoral roll of 109 are mature adults. We have strong ties with our Church School where we see an important opportunity for future membership.

A small group of people meet regularly to study and discuss the Bible Reading Fellowship Notes. There is an annual retreat at Shepherds Dene which we share with other parishes in the Diocese.



Boldon Church of England Primary School

The incumbent has usually been Chair of Governors and two PCC members are Foundation Governors.

The school has been under threat of closure due to falling pupil numbers in the local area. The previous incumbent has provided total commitment and support to the schools campaign to avoid closure as well as actively continuing the role of Chair of Governors in the day to day running of the school. Sadly the Local Authority has recently confirmed the decision that the school will close at the end of the academic year.

This leaves one community Primary School within the parish.

Social Life at St. Nicholas

We sincerely believe that a social life as well as a spiritual one is essential and we have several groups and committees who meet and arrange events.



The Social Committee organises our functions with at least one event held every month except during the seasons of Lent.

Events have ranged from musical entertainments, themed evenings, quizzes, race nights, Murder Mystery Plays (with the help of the St. Nicholas Players), barbeques, bingo and beetle drives.

These attract participation from all areas of the community not only from regular church members. We feel this is a valuable form of contact which is a large step in introducing them to church fellowship.

The Boldon Bonanza and Christmas Fair are two major events in our social calendar which raise essential funds while providing an opportunity for the whole local area to join together in a social and relaxed environment.

The Ladies Group meets once a month and organises events such as theatre visits, talks, art and craft demonstrations, mystery tours, party nights or just a meal out together.

The Men's Group meets monthly at various "Licensed Premises". Informal discussions cover world events and football.

Brownies and Rainbows are part of the St. Nicholas family, and both packs normally have maximum membership and a waiting list. Led by suitably qualified church members these organisations meet once a week during the school term. The Brownies and Rainbows attend church parade monthly.

This is a good opportunity for the children and church members to worship together.

Church members are always keen to support the children's fund-raising or social activities and the children enjoy being the centre of attention.

An **Annual Parish Outing** to York ends with Evensong at the Minster.

300 Club

One of our most successful and longstanding successes is the 300 club. Numbers are drawn on a monthly basis for cash prizes and profits are returned to church funds.

Charitable Works

We are firmly committed to caring for the world community through our links with **Christian Aid**. Since 1968 Christian Aid week has been an integral part of our parish life and a door to door collection is made annually by a dedicated group of volunteers. Amounts collected has risen year on year and since 1980 our records show that in our parish we have collected in the region of £18,000 for the work of Christian Aid.

We are a **Fairtrade Parish** and support the purchase of these products on a personal basis as well as promoting awareness through the sale of Fairtrade items in church.

A **Christingle** service is held during Advent which includes our church children, Brownies, Rainbows and children from the church school supported by their families. As part of our charitable giving we also donate annually from our income to a variety of good causes.

Church Organisations

The Parochial Church Council meets once a month under the chairmanship of the Incumbent, consisting of 18 members including the Churchwardens, Deanery Synod Representatives, Treasurer and Secretary.

The Standing Committee, consists of the PCC Chairman, Churchwardens, PCC Secretary Treasurer and Reader.

Finances

Although we are not a wealthy parish we have paid our full parish share and meet all maintenance costs for the services, buildings, heating and lighting. With the help of generous donations we have also renewed or bought additional items such as hymn books and photocopier.

Recently we completed a GEM programme which has been very successful, giving us confidence in covering working expenses in full for some time.

The Restoration Fund has been used to pay off a previous loan and is kept open to lay a foundation for contingencies. We encourage fund raising and donations for future restoration work.

The maintenance and care of the churchyard is the responsibility of the local authority.

Church Buildings

Built on a Saxon Foundation the church dominates the landscape around the village of West Boldon. The present building erected by the monks from Wearmouth would have been the stopping point on their way to the monastery at Jarrow.



Nearby is the Rectory, a purpose built modern family house built on the site of the previous 18th century building. It has recently been renovated by the Diocese at a cost of £60,000.



Our Parish Hall and garden is also nearby. It has facilities for the disabled and allows us the flexibility of holding functions indoors or out. It is available for hire by other local organisations.



Our Hope and Vision

The parish of Boldon sees our new Rector as someone who will give us our vision of a growing and witnessing church. They will continue to build up the body of Christ here in this place and will not be afraid to provide leadership with commitment.

Tradition and History

We believe in this parish that our church holds a special place in everyone's heart.

St. Nicholas Boldon is the principal and original benefice of this area, with the title "Rector of Boldon" being an ancient one. The list of Rectors is documented from 1220 to the present date.



Our Rector

We need a priest who is dynamic, hard working and who will motivate others. We see our Rector as the catalyst to encourage and to continue to move people towards God and his Church. We need the right person who can relate and inspire all ages, building on from the work already undertaken by the previous incumbent.



St Nicholas Parish Hall



Village Scenes



Boldon C of E Primary School



