



St. Michael's Church Newhaven

Mission statement

Heritage of 900 years of Christian witness and worship in
Newhaven at the centre of our community

Worship

A safe **Haven** for our community by being welcoming and
outward looking, offering a sense of belonging.

Christian Nurture - Stewardship - Pastoral Care - FUN!

Offer of **Hope** of the gospel, drawing people to Jesus
through discipleship and a deeper response to God

Evangelism - Community Engagement



The Person

We are looking for a minister:

- Who will preach the Gospel and put Jesus at the centre of everything we do.
- Who can minister to a broad congregation made up longstanding older members and the new families and young people who are joining our Sunday services, balancing traditional worship with a variety of more contemporary worship styles.
- Who is able to outreach further to our 10-12 local families who form our Messy Church congregation and help them grow in their faith by running courses which explore the Christian faith, and build on existing links with schools.
- Who can build on the excellent work undertaken by our youth team who are in contact with up to 70 young people a week. There is opportunity to minister further to their families. This can be done in conjunction with the Diocese's Family Social Worker who operates in the area.
- Who sees managing the "civic" church of the town as priority for an outward-looking church, and will uphold relationships with the Town Council and place importance on services such as Remembrance, Dieppe Raid Memorial, Mayor's Carol Service and links with uniformed groups.
- Who is pastoral and can minister to older members of our congregation.

We are looking for an minister who has the vision to grow the church, putting Jesus at the centre, who is Evangelical with a heart for a deprived community and who sees ministering to people from all backgrounds as a privilege.





Church Life

The Church as a Worshipping People

St. Michael's stands within the evangelical tradition of the Church of England and aims to be a friendly, welcoming church to all.

The Electoral Roll at the 2022 AGM showed a membership of 66. Another measure of church membership used by the Diocese is 'Worshipping Community' which includes all those who worship at least once a month – or who would health/pandemic permitting. The most recent figure for St. Michael's is 75.

During 2022 there were six baptisms, two weddings and five funerals. The average (excluding 2020 and 2021) was four baptisms, two weddings and four funerals.

Our current pattern of worship is:

10:45am – Morning Praise (a Service of the Word) on the first Sunday of the month. Holy Communion on the second, fourth and fifth Sundays of the month. We have a Sunday School for children aged 3-11 at these services, and our current average attendance is between 45-55 (with around 10-15 under-18s).

On the 3rd Sunday of the month we have Café Church in the Hall at 10:45, followed by a shortened Holy Communion in the Church at 11.45am. Café Church was introduced in autumn 2021 to create a more informal service suitable to invite families with younger children to attend. This service has grown significantly in recent months, and has become a key means to draw families and young people into the wider worshipping community. We now struggle to fit people into the Church hall, and may soon have to consider how to respond to that growth!



During term-time we hold 'Monday Messy Church' once a month. This is led by Sara, the Youth Worker, and a team of volunteers. It attracts around 20+ enthusiastic children plus their carers. The session includes games, crafts and worship on a Biblical theme and finishes with a simple hot dog and dessert meal.

The church is open for private prayer on Wednesday mornings.

The church and the community it serves

The congregation. There is a core of people who are very faithful in worship and church membership – some of whom have been members for all or most of their lives. Over the years we have had families who have been part of the congregation, but who have now moved away or the children have grown up. We used to hold Messy Church services on Sundays and then as families became more over-committed at weekends, we transferred to one Monday a month after school. This has attracted some very enthusiastic children and families over the years and a few have transitioned to the younger end of our Youth Work through our Sparks youth group for older Primary School children.

It has been said that if the Sunday congregation, the youth congregation and the Messy Church congregation were to all meet together it would add up to a very good spread of ages and a large congregation! That said, we've recently seen a very encouraging trend, with a good number of these young people and families joining the Sunday congregation.

We currently have a small but very talented group of musicians (working with a small choir) who lead us in a blend of traditional hymns and contemporary songs.

Members of the congregation are very involved in different aspects of Newhaven life and many of them have extensive community connections.





Major festivals such as Christmas and Easter are a high point in our calendar of service. At Easter we hold a service on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday morning. In the afternoon we hold a 'Sad Day, Happy Day' event with families, re-telling the Easter Story through age appropriate stories and crafts. This is followed by hot cross buns in the church hall and an Easter egg hunt in the church. On Easter Saturday evening we hold a Service of Light and a celebratory service on Easter Sunday.



Christmas services include an afternoon Christingle service, Carols by Candlelight, a very popular Crib Service with puppet show, a Midnight Mass and Christmas Day morning service. We also welcome the local school for their Christingle service. In addition, the church hosts the Mayor's Community Carol Service and, prior to Covid, the Salvation Army's Carol Concert.

Partnership with the Methodists

St. Michael's entered into a Local Ecumenical Partnership with the Methodists following the closure of the Newhaven Methodist Church in the 1970s. This has been an important part of our identity, and the Rector has been accredited by Methodist Conference each year as an 'Authorised Methodist Minister'. But over recent years the Partnership has become increasingly less core to our life and mission. As a result, we're currently in the process of dissolving the Partnership in order to focus more fully on our growing collaboration with St. Leonard's, Denton.



900th Anniversary Celebrations

In 2020 we began to celebrate our 900th anniversary (1120 being generally given as the original date). Due to the pandemic this continued into 2021. The 900 years project with its tagline Heritage, Haven, Hope included numerous events that reached out into the community. These included:

- a social history, art and flower festival,
- a 'Familiar Faces' trail of photos around the town, accompanied by a book which raised funds for the local foodbank
- an art project with the local school children who created 12 'stained glass' windows currently installed in the church, detailing 900 years of history
- a timeline and self-guided tour of the church and church yard
- a showcase of music, narration and song composed by our organist, Mike Flood, to celebrate the 900 years that the church has watched over the town
- an award winning short film and school's project based on two of those pieces

Excitingly, our celebrations included a visit by HRH Princess Anne in September 2020.



Other congregations in Newhaven

Following the closure of the Roman Catholic Church and a Community Church, the remaining denominations are Newhaven Baptist Church and Newhaven Elim Church. Historically there have been excellent ecumenical relationships with members from all the churches working closely together on 'The Breakout Centre' – a Christian 'drop-in' that was held in a vacant shop on the High Street for about ten years until the building was requisitioned by the District Council. The Breakout Centre used to run a small Food Bank, and this was transferred to the Baptist Church, who have developed and grown it – especially meeting the needs that arose during the pandemic and the current squeeze on household incomes.

Youth Work

Sara Alexander is our part-time Youth Worker, shared with Denton Church. She is funded by the Diocese for 18 hours a week in an arrangement that started with a shared initiative with the Salvation Army 20 years ago. In 2016, we set up a Youth For Christ (YFC) centre as a separate charity for the purposes of fundraising and to make the youth work more sustainable into the future. We also aimed to draw in ecumenical participation – initially from Elim and the Baptist Church. The Diocese generously continues to fund Sara's post even though she is now, technically-speaking, the YFC Centre Director.

Sara has pioneered a remarkable youth ministry over her two decades in post and has built up strong links with young people and their families. Some of her past members now have their own children attending youth clubs here! Sara is widely known and respected in the community and this youth work is the longest-running (non-uniformed) youth work in the town.





The style and pattern of our youth work has changed over time. We underwent the usual revisions during the Covid pandemic, and are now settling on a more consistent pattern. At present the youth work consists of two local access youth clubs (one in Newhaven and another in Denton), a lunchtime club at the local secondary school, a targeted craft and mentoring session, a youth group for 8-11 year olds and a Sunday evening group with an emphasis on discipleship and exploring faith. In addition we work with a group of 5 local churches in Newhaven and Seaford to run a monthly youth service which attracts around 40 young people, many from unchurched backgrounds.



Setting up as a YFC Centre has enabled Sara to fundraise independent of the church and this has meant more funding for sessional workers. Sara has always led a strong team of volunteers but has now been able to pay some other experienced youth workers to take more overall responsibility for running some sessions. A key part of that team is Sara's assistant, Daniel Strachan, who helps to coordinate all the sessions and energetically engages with families and young people across Newhaven.



Newhaven is not an easy parish to share and foster faith. But we've been faithful over many years, holding out the gospel of Jesus and loving the community, and are now seeing fresh signs of spiritual life among the young people. We are well supported by the Diocesan Youth Officer, and the Diocesan 'May Camp' each year is a highlight for many of our young people for whom it is their only 'holiday away' in a year. It is also the opportunity that many have taken over the years to take steps forward with Christ.

The Parish

Newhaven is a small port and working town at the mouth of the River Ouse, about mid-point between Brighton and Eastbourne.

The town has a population of approximately 15,000, but this includes the neighbouring parish, to the east, of Denton and South Heighton, with whom we're seeking to partner more closely. The parish of St. Michael's has a population of about 10,000.

The Church Urban Fund website states: This parish ranks **1,417** out of **12,382**, where 1 is the most deprived parish. This means that it is in the top 12% most deprived parishes in the country. However, the town has a strong community 'feel' to it and many people are very loyal to it, even when it is 'looked down on' by other towns or villages. There have been many initiatives for the 'redevelopment' of Newhaven, but they have often been disappointing in terms of positive results for existing residents, or for fruitful financial investment in the town. However, the town has recently received funding from the Government's Levelling Up Fund (£12.68 million) to support the town's fishing industry, £19.3 million from the Towns Fund, and a further £5 million from the Future High Street Fund, which together with initiatives such as the redevelopment of the UTC building by Lewes District Council into a business and community hub and the re-development of the town centre does add to the feeling that the tide might be about to turn and Newhaven might finally be on the "up".

Newhaven has a [Town Council](#), is situated in [Lewes District Council](#) and [East Sussex County Council](#). It is in the parliamentary constituency of Lewes, currently held by Maria Caulfield MP, Conservative, who has based her office in our town.





Schools

There are three primary schools in the parish and one secondary school, Seahaven Academy. The only local authority school is Harbour Primary and Nursery School (Community School) just over the road from the church, and we have particularly good and close relationships with it (the other schools are Academies). Harbour School does a fantastic job for the education and development of its pupils and their families and has produced some remarkable achievements in enabling children to regain lost ground due to Covid. This takes place in the context of a challenging environment (Reception to Y6: Pupil Premium - 39% 167 children; Pupil Premium and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) - 16% 68 children; SEND - 28% 106 children).

The previous Rector was a Governor at Harbour School for many years. Since January 2022, St. Michael's has organised and helped fund a 'Bagel Breakfast' initiative whereby small snacks are provided for each pupil at the start of the school day and at break time. This was in response to the fact that children were coming to school hungry, and the consequent negative effects on learning and behaviour. Our Youth Worker runs a lunchtime club one day a week at Seahaven Academy, and our Priest-in-Charge has been invited for assemblies and to host services for children and parents in the church. The door is very much open for stronger partnership and to make Jesus known to staff and families.

Housing

There is a range of social and private housing, with prices driven up by the proximity to Brighton. There are several sheltered housing complexes in the parish, but no residential homes.

The two **medical practices** are situated near the town centre and the **Rehabilitation Centre** provides some short-term care as well as Polyclinic facilities. There is a Minor Injuries department at Lewes and an Accident and Emergency department at Brighton.



Leisure Facilities

The town is surrounded by the South Downs National Park offering miles of walking and mountain biking. There are many beautiful places of interest to visit and the cliffs and pebble beaches are right on our doorstep, together with beautiful river walks along the Egrets Way. In the town there is an indoor swimming pool and several gyms. There are town cricket and football teams, a tennis club, a gig rowing club, indoor and outdoor bowls clubs, a local sailing club and golf courses at Peacehaven and Seaford.

There are several groups for children and young people including Beavers, Cubs, Brownies, Scouts, Sea and Army Cadets. There is also a Skate Park and Pump Track, youth football teams and a couple of recreation grounds with children's playgrounds.

[Sussex Community Development Association](#) originating in Newhaven runs a variety of community support organisations including youth clubs, parent and toddler groups and a 'Community Supermarket'.

Town Centre

The town centre is mainly pedestrianised and, like many others, has declined significantly over recent decades, although it is hoped the recent funding success will go some way to address this. There is a Morrisons Local store and Poundstretcher on the High Street as well as a few small shops, a couple of pubs, cafes, some small restaurants, fish and chip shops and take aways. Sainsburys, Lidl, The Range, B&Q, Halfords, Pets at Home, Macdonald's, KFC and other chains have outlets just over the bridge.

There are a variety of small businesses and community enterprise initiatives and an active [Chamber of Commerce](#). There are a good number of businesses running on the small industrial estates around the town. Initiatives like 'Creative Newhaven' aim to bring together artisans, artists and entrepreneurs. This has recently resulted in a small art gallery opening in the town centre.





Hillcrest Community Centre

The Hillcrest is an active community centre which hosts a variety of groups and events including Knit N' Natter, the community choir 'Haven Harmonies', U3A and a variety of art and creative classes. There is also a popular community café and the centre.

The town has historically attracted artists due to the relatively low cost of housing and the attractive coastal light and environment. Each summer there are a range of artist exhibitions, installations and open-houses that take place under the banner of 'Lewes Art Wave', and the church hosts artist installations and creative initiatives during the Newhaven Festival in September each year.



Transport

The busy A259 coast road runs through the town and there is a good regular bus service to Brighton and Eastbourne. The rail service runs to Lewes, and Brighton with relatively good connections to London.

The Port and Coast

The Port is managed by the [Newhaven Port Authority](#). The Transmanche ferry (DFDS) run operates roughly twice a day to Dieppe taking about 4 hours to reach France. Newhaven has a fishing fleet of around 30 vessels who will benefit from the recent levelling up award. The [Newhaven Coastguard](#) is supported by the [National Coastwatch Institution](#) and the [Newhaven Lifeboat](#), whose crews have been awarded 19 medals for bravery, protect those using the river and the sea.



Attractions

[Newhaven Fort](#) is a tourist attraction originally built to defend the town from invasion. The parade ground is used for open air events of various kinds.

[Paradise Park](#) is a family-run garden centre with extensive indoor and outdoor play spaces – a great place to go with children whatever the season. Next door is [Newhaven Museum](#) which tells the story of the town's social and maritime history through objects and photographs.

Our Buildings

The Church

The church building retains a Norman tower and semi-circular apse, but has been enlarged over the last 250 years with a capacity of approx. 250 people including the balcony. The large tolling bell was installed in 1780 and the 10-bell carillon (or strictly speaking, a 'Chime') was installed in 1929. The organ in the balcony was built in 1854 and is listed.

In 2018, a state-of-the-art AV system was installed in the church to provide an automated screen, projector and sound system which can be operated from a physical mixer at the back or the church, or remotely using iPads or iPhones via WiFi. A hearing loop is also available

The boiler in the church was replaced in 2019.



The Church Hall

The church hall was built in 1969 and was completely refurbished in 2019 thanks to a large grant from Veolia – the waste management company which operates the controversial incinerator just over the river. The building includes a hall, two separate meeting rooms, an office, a kitchen and toilet, one of which includes shower. The hall is used for a weekly 'coffee and chat' session on Wednesdays as well as youth work after school on Thursday and on Sunday evenings. Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon use the hall four times a week (52 weeks a year, without a break). These groups are deeply appreciative of the support they receive from the parish. There is a regular coffee morning and there are a number of social activities that fully restarted post Covid. The hall is also used for a variety of church social events and can be hired out to the public for parties etc.





The Rectory

The Rectory is situated just above the church and set well back from the road, with a permissive path running past its boundary and through the churchyard. It was built in the 1950s in the grounds of the Old Rectory. The accommodation comprises on the ground floor: a small study with view to the front entrance driveway, lounge (adequate for small meetings of up to about 10 people), a kitchen linked to a 'family room', and a utility room by the back door. On the first floor there are two double bedrooms (one with a basin) and two single rooms, a bathroom with shower and a separate WC. There is a brick-built single garage, with a hardstanding for more cars. There is full gas-fired central heating, double glazing throughout and an intruder alarm. The Rectory is due a quinquennial survey and work in 2024.

There is a good-sized garden, mainly comprising grassed areas, but with some fruit trees and other larger trees.



The Diocese

Newhaven is part of the Lewes and Seaford Deanery, which is part of the Diocese of Chichester.

This is the largest deanery in the diocese comprising about 30 parishes. The deanery is made up of rural and urban parishes and a wide range of churchmanship. The clergy chapter is friendly and supportive with regular meetings which are generally informal and used to share information, good practice, and mutual encouragement. The chapter usually organises an informal 24-hour retreat each Autumn.

The diocese requested each parish to put together a Mission Action Plan (MAP) in 2021 and is currently going through a process of supporting deaneries in pulling these together to develop a Deanery MAP. A very positive proposal for a more joined-up approach to Youth Ministry has been put together as an early product of this process. This was put together as a joint initiative by Sara, our Youth Worker and Stephan, the Children and Families Worker from St Leonard's, Seaford.

The Diocese of Chichester has historically had a traditional anglo-catholic flavour, but is very much open to the flourishing of all. The diocesan Bishop, Bp Martin was joined by two new suffragans in 2020. These are Bp Will Hazlewood, the Bishop of Lewes and Bp Ruth Bushyagar, the Bishop of Horsham. They make up a strong, able leadership in the Diocese and the Church House administration is also very able and supportive of ministry in the parishes.

Currently St. Michael's contributes about 25% of the Ministry Costs needed to run the parish, a reflection of the social deprivation in the town and its predominantly low-income households. We are very thankful to God for the massive support that the parish has received from the diocese and its wealthier parishes over recent decades. We are currently aiming and budgeting to return to our pre-pandemic level of contribution during 2023.





St. Michael's Church Newhaven

Thank you for taking the time to read this. If God is calling you to serve him in Newhaven we look forward to welcoming you into the family of St. Michael's, and hope you will find this next stage of your ministry happy and rewarding.

Parish: St. Michael's, Newhaven
Deanery: Lewes
Diocese: Chichester

If you would like more information about the church or parish before applying please contact our Priest-in-Charge, Rev. Mike Milmine

Phone: 07541930605

Email: dentonrectory@gmail.com

