

Welcome to St. Matthew's!



St. Matthew's Parish Church is situated in Douglas, the capital town of the Isle of Man. For over 110 years it has served the needs of the local community, the wider Anglo Catholic community in the Island and visitors from around the world.

Our common life has the Sunday Morning Sung Mass at its centre. Here we encounter God in scripture and prayer, sacrament and worship, community and fellowship.

Traditional in worship and orthodox in teaching the community seeks both to serve and to challenge the world around us and the church to which we belong.

We welcome applications from priests in the Anglo-Catholic tradition who will be a positive role model to the congregation and wider Diocese, in growing a healthy church in the Anglo-Catholic tradition; one whose devotion and dedication to a task sets him apart from all others and whose personality would win him friends far beyond the parish, even among people who are not connected to St. Matthew's.

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THE ISLE OF MAN

The Island is 33 miles long and 13 miles wide situated in the Irish Sea between England and Ireland. It is not part of the United Kingdom but is a self-governing Crown dependency.



The population of the Island is 85,000 of whom 84% claim Christianity as their religion. 15% are religiously unaffiliated.

The Island has the lowest crime rate in the British Isles with 86% of residents saying they have an excellent quality of life. Over 4,200 businesses call the Island Home, and the personal tax rate is among the lowest in Europe.

There are normally (absent covid) daily sailings on the ferry to Liverpool (not during the winter) or Heysham, and occasional services to Dublin and Belfast. With the collapse of Flybe, flights are in some disarray, but Easyjet fly regular services to Liverpool and London, and other regional airlines are stepping in to cover other routes e.g. to Manchester and Birmingham.



The Island has a very strong community spirit and we would wish St. Matthew's to become an important part of that Island community.

The island has a distinctive culture of its own and is famous for:

- The TT motorcycle races
- Manx cats
- Victorian transport heritage
- Manx (celtic) language
- No fewer than nine golf courses
- Kippers!

The Manx Gaelic language, a Celtic tongue, was spoken by the majority of the population until the nineteenth century, and although the last traditional native speaker died in 1974, the language is currently being revived and certain members of St Matthew's congregation have been keen supporters.



The Island is famous for its stunning scenery from rugged moorland to leafy glens and beautiful beaches.

Walking is popular as is cycling. Museums and National Heritage sites throughout the Island have won numerous awards – see <https://manxnationalheritage.im/>

Educational opportunities on the Island are first class with many excellent and well funded schools in Douglas. Higher education facilities exist on the Island and young people wishing to follow degree courses in the United Kingdom are assisted by means tested grants. There is also University College Isle of Man in Douglas and offers a further, higher, vocational and social courses.

Music is an important part of Manx culture and schools offer music lessons. There are many orchestras, bands and choirs who perform to a very high standard.

For the children of Island clergy, King William's College, a co-educational independent boarding and day school offers bursaries of less one third of the fees for boarders and less one half of the fees for day pupils.

Douglas has been the Island's capital since 1874 with a population of 27,938 and is the centre of the Island's thriving finance sector and the location of the main government offices and high court.

The National Sports Centre is in Douglas as are two entertainment venues: the Villa Marina, and the Gaiety Theatre – a fine example of a working Victorian theatre, designed by renowned architect, Frank Matcham, and now restored to its original splendour. Both venues are used throughout the year. See www.villagaiety.com

ABOUT THE PARISH

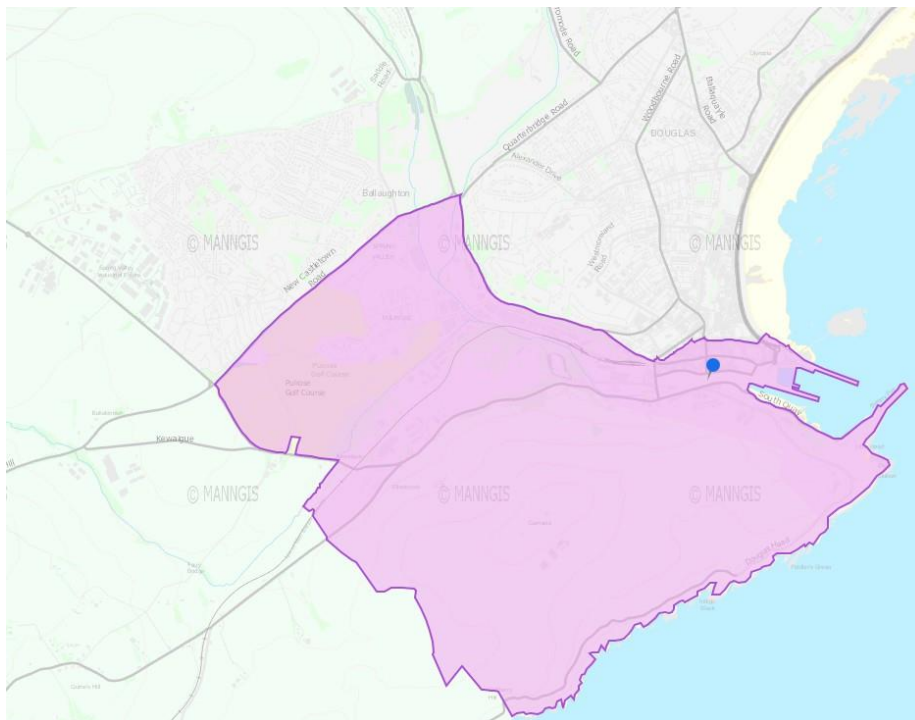
The population of the parish of St. Matthew the Apostle (population approximately 2,200) live chiefly on two council housing estates, Pulrose and Spring Valley. There is a primary school within these estates together with a pre-school assessment centre. Much of the rest of the parish population live in social or privately rented housing around the Lord St area. Most of the original housing in the parish around the church and quayside has now been replaced by restaurants, offices and a Tesco supermarket. There are some large homes as well as large old houses sub-divided into flats on Douglas head and there is the Douglas Golf Course and to the south an area of farmland.

There are some small industries and a large service sector in the parish, especially along the quayside area.

The financial heart of the Island is set in Upper Douglas (not in the parish, chiefly in our neighbouring parish of St George and All Saints). Because the island is a low tax jurisdiction, many companies have located their international business here meaning there are plenty of employment opportunities across a range of levels and skills.

The old church of St. Matthew was a chapel of ease and could seat about 250. The population in the quayside area outgrew the old church, and the new church was probably one of the last churches designed by John Loughborough Pearson, built between 1895-1902.

With this being the only traditional Anglo-Catholic church in the Island, the congregation travels from all over the Island to worship in St. Matthew's and thus the area served by the priest would extend beyond the parish boundary as needs arose. He would need to have a car and a clean licence.

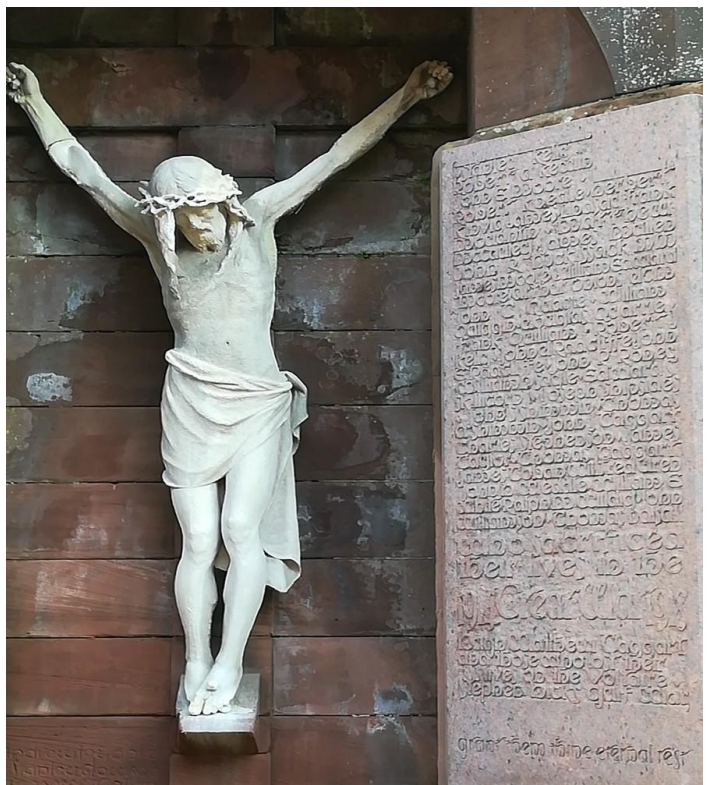


This shows the parish boundaries and where the church is located.



The parish has strong connections to the sea and we would wish the new Incumbent to continue this association via chaplaincy to the Sea Cadets, together with maintaining links at the Sea Terminal/Cruise Terminal. Overlooking the bay, from Douglas Head, there is a statue of **Sir William Hillary**, who lived in the island. After witnessing a shipwreck, he founded what became the National Lifeboat Institution.

The famous Manx artist and designer, **Archibald Knox** (1865- 1933) was born in Tromode (in the parish of St George and All Saints) and sang in St. Matthew's choir. His father ran an engineering business on South Quay, Douglas. He qualified as an Art teacher and later worked with the notable jewellery firm of Liberty & Co. of London, who started to produce their Cymric range of silverware, followed the following year by a range of Tudric Pewter. From this time Knox, with his special style of Celtic revival, became inextricably linked with these Liberty products, establishing himself as one of the foremost designers in the English Art Nouveau movement.



In 1912 he was back in the Isle of Man and increasingly his designs appear on war memorials and tombstones, such as St. Matthew's war memorial (above).

THE CHURCH AND ITS PEOPLE

Worship in the parish is in the Catholic tradition with which the majority of the congregation feel most comfortable. Prior to the interregnum, Mass was said or sung on a daily basis. Special services are held for all major feasts and solemnities. Holy Communion is taken to those who are sick or housebound with a preference to receive communion from an ordained priest rather than a lay-person.



Corpus Christi

The members of the congregation contribute to worship in many ways, through reading, serving, as intercessors, flower arranging, cleaning, kitchen assistants, gardening etc.

Each year for the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day) those who have lost a loved one are invited to attend a Mass in remembrance of them.

A pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham takes place each year during the summer time when parishioners are joined by worshippers from other Island parishes. There is a Cell of Our Lady of Walsingham at St. Matthew's.

The **Sunday's Cool** (*a group for children of the congregation – "Sunday School"*) meets twice monthly, currently led by two qualified teachers. They begin their meeting in the church hall and join the congregation during the service. Extra meetings can be arranged for special times such as for baptisms, harvest and Christmas.



Services

Sunday

9.00am Low Mass
10.30am Sung Mass

Monday

12 noon Low Mass

Wednesday

11.30am Low Mass

Friday

11.00 am Low Mass

Communicants at the weekday masses number 5 on average, and at Low and High Mass on a Sunday they number approximately 35.

However, we would welcome different forms of ministry such as Bible-study groups and prayer meetings. St. Matthew's has occasionally shared activities with the Roman Catholic church of St. Mary's, such as the crib festival at Christmas.

During the interregnum, the Churchwardens and PCC organised cover to enable the Mass schedule to be continued, with the help of retired priests, who regularly assist with both weekday and Sunday services.

LAY MINISTRY IN THE PARISH

The new priest will be ably supported by a small but dedicated team of people within the parish.

We have an organist who has been committed to St. Matthew's for over 40 years, organising concerts and recitals in the church throughout the year.



Above, John Riley, organist and churchwarden, at the organ.

There is now a team of flower arrangers who are very keen to maintain the reputation St. Matthew's has for beauty, especially in its floral displays.

We are keen to continue the work which has begun during the interregnum, where lay members are involved in parish visiting, intercessions and stewarding the church when its doors are open during the daytime, for those who wish to enter for a moment of quiet contemplation.

Our dedicated organist also organises other various musical events such as a Christmas service of Lessons and Carols which was attended by 150+ last year. Among the charities who have been helped with donations are the Sepsis Trust and the Dementia Society in the Island.

THE CHURCH AND ITS BUILDINGS



The church buildings are generally in good repair, although there are some projects to be undertaken.

Adjacent to the church are the upper and lower halls, approximately 1,000 square feet each, with the lower hall boasting an office for clergy use, kitchen, toilets and stage. It is heated by a very recently installed oil fuelled boiler giving hot water on demand. Both halls are used extensively, generating valuable income for the church. In addition, they provide a link between the church and the various music, dance and cheerleaders clubs that meet there.

The hall is sound but in need of some refurbishment, but it is possible that some of the work may be carried out by the Community Service team who recently painted the church railings (which are in a conservation area and needed an eye to detail). Such unpaid work is excellent for the young persons involved, and they are aware how much it is appreciated by the church. It is also a good 'meeting place' between the priest and the young offenders.

- The church and hall were rewired in 2011.
- New central heating was installed in the church in 2016.
- A new central heating boiler has been installed in the church hall in 2019.

The organ loft was in need of some work but this has been done recently - there is finance available from a benefactor to pay for this work. The organ was originally built by Messrs Ernest Wadsworth Ltd. of Manchester in 1922 and was rebuilt by Wood of Huddersfield in 1979. It is recognised as one of the finest on the Island and is frequently used for recitals.

MISSION AND COMMUNITY



St. Matthew's does have weddings from time to time. Some baptisms take place during the Sunday morning Sung Mass, due to local connections. Sunday's Cool usually arrange their meetings to coincide with these in order to sing a song of welcome to the newly baptised.

We have experienced a reduction in the number of funerals being conducted during 2019 due to the introduction of 'secular celebrants' at the newly refurbished crematorium. There is no churchyard – just a small garden area.

In **TT Week** (June) and the **Festival of Motorcycles** (August), the lower hall is used by campers visiting for the racing. Since the 1980s it has also been used by groups of parents and children from New Cross, London to give them a holiday. The halls bring in income which helps towards the upkeep of the halls and church.

The church supports Graih (local charity for the homeless); USPG; The Women's Refuge; The Food Bank and works with Douglas Town Centre Management and Douglas Town Council. Other charities are supported throughout the year by monies raised from concerts, organ recitals, beetle drives and other fun evenings.

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Last year St. Matthew's linked with IOM Government and the Cruise Team to open the church for visitors whenever the ships were in port (the port and Sea Terminal being in St. Matthew's parish). This proved very popular, extending our Christian friendship to visitors from places as far afield as Japan and America, as well as the UK. Unfortunately, all cruises have been cancelled this year owing to COVID. The parish is linked with the Sea Cadets and the Army Cadets, as the vicar of St. Matthew's has traditionally been their chaplain. It is hoped that this connection can

perhaps be brought more within the church family in the future.

The expanding Mothers' Union meet regularly during the autumn/winter months and invite guest speakers.

The parish also works with the Probation Service.



A Children's Mass on Christmas Eve.

The priest is Fr Ben Bradshaw

Former Chaplain to the Bishop of Sodor and Man

THE DIOCESE AND BEYOND

The Diocese of Sodor and Man is a good place in which to work - particularly for priests committed to the worship and mission of God and collaborative ministry.

Priests on the Island receive a stipend bonus, an annual Travel Allowance and an Easter Offering – the Archdeacon will include a note concerning these details.

This appointment, as the previous two appointments, is expected to be a 50-50 appointment with the priest offering half of his time to the parish and half to the diocese; previous priests have taken on responsibility for pastoral care around the retirement and nursing homes in Douglas, but this is negotiable, and is not presently being suggested.

The Vicar of St Matthew's is *ex officio* a member of the Board of Directors of the Ellan Vannin Home, a retirement home with a CofE ethos in Douglas, along with the Vicar of St Thomas (when there is one) and the Vicar of St George and All Saints (who is the Archdeacon).

The parishes in the Island are organised into four Mission Partnerships – North, South, East and West. These were set up in 2009 to replace three Rural Deaneries. They are governed by Mission Councils comprising lay and clergy representatives from member parishes. The aim is to promote the mission of the Church in its district, and to promote community and co-operation among those parishes. Mission Partnerships are not part of the synodical system.

St. Matthew's lies in the Eastern Mission Partnership and is a part of the Town Centre Group Ministry (which is somewhat redundant as by law the Group Chapter is made up only of Incumbents and only St George's has consistently had an Incumbent in the past few years).

The bishop expects all stipendiary clergy to faithfully attend Mission Partnership Councils, and also to pray with lay and ordained colleagues. The Easter Mission Partnership meets on Thursday mornings at 9.30am for Morning Prayer, followed by coffee and fellowship and we would expect the appointed priest to make this a priority (although we understand it may require a Mass to be re-scheduled if and when the Daily Mass can once again be supported).

The parish supports the Diocesan Bishop, Bishop Peter, in his work on achieving Eco Church Awards for parishes throughout the diocese. St. Matthew's has started to work towards theirs in their bee-friendly garden, caretaking the environment around them and caring for the world through worship and teaching.

In July 2020, the Church would have opened its doors for the island's annual flower festival. The garden on the North Quay has proved to be a point of interest to all who pass by and flower/seed/bulb donations are welcomed, some planted as a dedication to loved ones.

St Patrick and St Maughold are said to have brought the Christian faith to the Island in the sixth century and the remains of small Celtic chapels or 'keeills' (which is simply Manx Gaelic for 'church', from Latin 'cella', i.e. a hermit's cell) are dotted around the Island. There is an annual ecumenical 'Praying the Keeills' week in May, in the organization of which members of St Matthew's congregation are involved.

THE VICARAGE

The present vicarage, a large semi-detached house is situated outside of the parish in a much sought after residential area of Douglas, 2.6km from the church. It is well-maintained, recently renovated and stands in pleasant, well-maintained grounds.

The building consists of two reception rooms, a breakfast room, kitchen, three bedrooms, one with an en suite shower room, one with an en suite W.C., two attic rooms one or even both suitable to be a bedroom, a family bathroom a separate W.C. St. Matthew's vicarage has been brought in line with the 'Green Guide' with a separate access to a study and cloakroom.



Depending on the status of the priest appointed, the Diocesan Property Committee would consider alternative accommodation in the parish which might be more suitable for a single person or a couple with no resident family. The bishop would very much like the priest to live in the parish. Such a move would also reduce the cost of heating such a large house.

Presently the vicarage is let and this may therefore be more likely.

It is the practice of the diocese to undertake repairs, refurbishment and redecoration of parsonages during the interregnum: the Archdeacon will meet with the appointed priest to discuss these matters and have them put in hand before his removal to the island.

THE VICAR WE SEEK

The parish sits firmly in the catholic tradition of the Church of England, is affiliated to the Society of St Wilfrid and St Hilda / Forward in Faith and is under the pastoral care of the Bishop of Beverley. The PCC would want to retain these links. The diocesan bishop and his senior staff are wholeheartedly committed to the Five principles of Mutual Flourishing and are eager to find a priest for this our only traditionalist parish and so preserve their unique witness on the Isle of Man.

However, the parish does not merit, by virtue of its being our smallest parish by far, a whole time priest, and the Board of Finance cannot afford a whole time stipend. An appointment of a whole time priest with a full stipend may be possible but may need to be combined with duties across Douglas and a major diocesan portfolio (e.g. the roles of Generous Giving Adviser and Environmental Officer are vacant at the moment). The Church Commissioners for the Isle of Man (effectively our Mission and Pastoral Committee) are actively considering pastoral reorganisation across the three Douglas town centre parishes, and a United Benefice with a Team Ministry is one possibility currently under consideration, although the alternative episcopal oversight requested by St. Matthew's PCC prevents ministry being shared more broadly.



Part time or House for Duty applicants will be considered.

The parish are willing to welcome applications from male priests in the Anglo-Catholic tradition, who will be a positive role model to the congregation and wider Diocese, in growing a healthy church in the Anglo-Catholic tradition; one who is able to reach out to the local community and bring the church to the people and the people to the church, encouraging others to join the congregation.

We want our new Incumbent to be someone who will embrace the challenge and opportunities we face; who does not mind starting with a small base of people. He will lead with innovative new ideas and approaches and work with the PCC and the congregation to implement these. He will need to understand and have experience of managing change.

Therefore, we seek a Priest who is approachable, prayerful, a good listener and committed to working collaboratively. The parish contains active members who are happy to contribute to the running of the parish and work under the new vicar as part of a team and we would like our new priest to be a team player, keen to work alongside them.

We would like a Priest who builds on existing links. We hope that the new priest would also continue to engage with the primary school on the Pulrose estate by visiting regularly for their morning assembly. The school holds its annual Christmas Carol Service in St. Matthew's Church.

We need a vision of growth for the Church, which includes reaching out to and attracting young families.

We seek someone to strengthen the unity of the parish and guide it into the future; who loves and cares for his people; who teaches the Christian faith, and who celebrates the Sacraments in the Catholic tradition. Above all, we seek a holy priest who loves Jesus and will love us too.

In return, we commit to work faithfully under that priest:

- The PCC is committed to meeting all expenses of office in full and promptly
- The congregation commits to pray for the Vicar
- We accept that change will be needed

Check out our website:

<http://www.stmatthewsiom.org>

where there are many photos of our activities and worship to be viewed - then, come and see us!

We are anxious to **meet** you and welcome you to our beautiful island!!

Pictured right, the Church this past Christmas.



Potential applicants are welcome to discuss with John Riley, Churchwarden, who can be contacted on johnr6755@gmail.com

