

## **Refurbishment**

In 2004 a faculty was obtained to re-order the upstairs worship space and to create a social space to replace the facilities that had existed in Northdale Hall. In addition to the hall / meeting area a kitchen and modern toilet block were created. The Upper Vestry was reduced in size to allow for the creation of a small flower preparation room with storage space for cleaning and gardening equipment.

The fixed font was removed and the former Baptistry is now used as an area for quiet prayer and reflection.

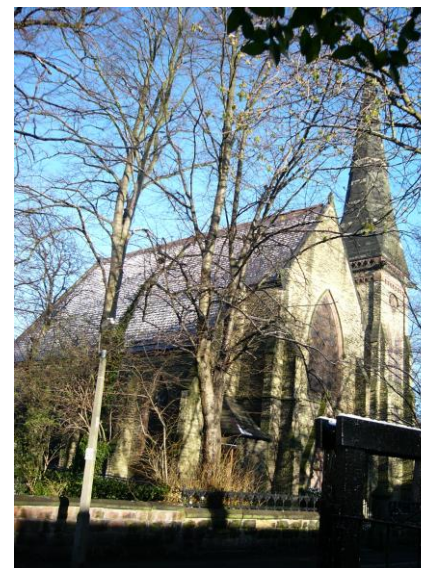
The worship area was opened up by the removal of the choir stalls and the Lady Chapel with full DAC approval. A sound system and induction loop were installed to facilitate access to the hard of hearing and the organ and its speakers were relocated.

The worship and social areas were redecorated and carpeted throughout.

Externally a ramp was fitted to the entrance in South Drive and this has become the main access to St Mary's.

**Our present Rector is the 21<sup>st</sup> in the Parish since its creation; a complete list is given below.**

- |       |              |                                |
|-------|--------------|--------------------------------|
| 1855. | The Reverend | S.Fenton.                      |
| 1880. | The Reverend | Edward Snowdon Smith.          |
| 1886. | The Reverend | Charles William Ridley.        |
| 1890. | The Reverend | John Harrison.                 |
| 1904. | The Reverend | Herbert Whateley.              |
| 1916. | The Reverend | A. B. Thornhill.               |
| 1919. | The Reverend | T. S. Stoney.                  |
| 1929. | The Reverend | R. A. Marsh.                   |
| 1938. | The Reverend | F. Taylor.                     |
| 1946. | The Reverend | F. H. Marshall.                |
| 1949. | The Reverend | A. H. Mock.                    |
| 1952. | The Reverend | C. P. K. Barnes.               |
| 1957. | The Reverend | John Mills.                    |
| 1963. | The Reverend | Arthur May.                    |
| 1969. | The Reverend | David Edward Webster.          |
| 1976. | The Reverend | John Anders.                   |
| 1981. | The Reverend | Alan Bell.                     |
| 1989. | The Reverend | Canon Richard (Dick) Williams. |
| 1997. | The Reverend | Joan Muriel Matthews.          |
| 2008. | The Reverend | Canon Malcolm Chamberlain      |
| 2014  | The Reverend | June Asquith                   |



## **THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN WAVERTREE**

**From A Short History by the late Dr R.M. Todd  
Reader at St Mary's 1948 – 2008**

### **Beginnings**

Towards the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the population of the Township of Wavertree had very much increased and the existing places of worship were insufficient to accommodate the inhabitants at Divine Service. To meet this need it was agreed to build a church dedicated to St Mary, on a site in Sandown Park given by Mr Hugh Hornby of Sandown Hall. (The Hornby family was the same as gave their name to the famous Hornby Dublo trains of yesteryear.)

In 1852, although only partially completed, the church was licensed for public worship and the Rev. Samuel Fenton, M.A., was appointed incumbent.

The church at this time was a mission church in the parish of Childwall. After a delay of some three years John, Lord Bishop of Chester, consecrated the church on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> May 1855.

On 30<sup>th</sup> January 1856 Queen Victoria made an Order in Council assigning a District Chapelry to the church and lay down the parish boundaries.

## **Developments**

By 1862 the need arose for a larger building and a faculty was obtained for enlarging the church by the addition of a chancel, north aisle and organ chamber. During 1865 this work was completed and a heating system was installed.

The original design for the church had included a west tower with spire and in 1882 this was created. The Rt. Rev. J.C. Ryle, first Bishop of Liverpool, laid the foundation stone of the tower on 5<sup>th</sup> June 1882. (This stone is set into the east wall of the present church.)

To commemorate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the consecration of the church in 1925 electric light was installed.

## **Disaster**

On the night of 28<sup>th</sup> November 1940, the church received a direct hit from a German bomb. The organ was completely destroyed and the east end of the church was badly damaged. The nave suffered little damage and on a few special occasions services were held in the bombed church; but such was the damage done by the weather, and destruction by vandals, that it was eventually decided to demolish the building. Sandown College was built on the site. The college and land were sold for housing development and the area is now known as Bonchurch Drive.

## **Survival**

The upper floor in the church hall in nearby Northdale Road was fitted out as a temporary church and was used for Divine Services for 12 years from December 1940 to December 1952.

## **Redevelopment**

In 1949 the Church Council agreed to purchase the Methodist church (built in 1872) in Victoria Park and convert it into the Parish Church of St Mary, Wavertree.

Very extensive alterations were carried out; all interior fixtures, including gallery and vestibule, were removed and two entrances closed. The old sanctuary became the baptistery and the east of the church constructed at what used to be the back of the building. Choir and clergy vestries were entirely rebuilt, modern sanitation incorporated and a new heating system was installed. The church was furnished with oak fittings, left in natural colour.

## **The Consecration**

Clifford Arthur Martin, the Lord Bishop of Liverpool, consecrated the church on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December 1952 at an impressive service attended by a large congregation, including the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Liverpool, Mr John Tilney, M.P. for Wavertree, and many other prominent people.

The magnificent East Window for the church was designed by Mr E. Carter-Preston, some of whose windows are in Liverpool Cathedral. It was dedicated by the Bishop of Warrington, the Rt. Rev. C.R. Claxton, on Sunday July 18<sup>th</sup> 1954 during the service of Evensong.

## **The Church Hall**

With an increase in the population of the parish at the beginning of last century, the need for a Church Hall, for use as a Sunday School and for young people's organisations, had become a pressing matter. In 1907 a piece of land in Northdale Road was purchased and the foundation stone was laid by the Lord Bishop of Liverpool on 11<sup>th</sup> June 1910.

It was of particular importance during the war when it was fitted out as a temporary church and was used for Divine Services from 1940 – 1952.

Repairs and renovations were carried out over the years but after much deliberation and discussion it was decided that the Hall was a greater liability than an asset. It was sold and some of the money used for refitting and refurbishing the church.

The building has since been used as a nursery.

## **The Day School**

Records show that St Mary's School was in operation as far back as 1863. Links with the Church were strong and attendance at Church and Sunday School were compulsory.

Due to increasing numbers a new school was built in Rathbone Road and opened on 28<sup>th</sup> October 1872. By 1891 an additional building was added to create an Infants Department.

After the Second World War and the new Education Act, the local Education Authority took over all financial responsibility for the school. In 1954 the school was reorganised as a Junior School; children aged 11 and over transferred to Olive Mount Secondary Modern School.

Changes to education and funding of schools, as well as falling numbers finally led to the school closing in 1991. The site of the day school was sold and some of the monies raised went to fund refitting and refurbishing the Church building.