



Rectorship of the Tolworth, Hook & Surbiton Team Ministry

&

Vicar of St Matthew's Church



The Diocese of  
**Southwark**



## Introduction



Thank you for your interest in the post of Rector of the Tolworth Hook and Surbiton Team Ministry (THiS) and the Vicar of St Matthew's Surbiton. This full-time post combines leadership across the team with particular responsibility for St Matthew's, and the person appointed will live in the rectory adjacent to St Matthew's. Each of the parishes in the THiS Team (St Matthew's Surbiton, St George's Tolworth and St Paul's Hook) has its own PCC and manages its own finances. The Team Rector will spend a

majority of time as Vicar of St Matthew's but will be invited to offer strategic and supportive leadership across the team, working wisely and collaboratively with colleagues and congregations. This profile reflects the relative loadings of the post with a longer section about St Matthew's, and a shorter section on the Team ministry and the other two THiS team churches.

If you need any more information please see our websites:

<https://www.stmatthewskt6.org/>

<https://www.stgeorgestolworth.org.uk/>

<https://stpaulschurchhook.co.uk/>

If you wish to explore more about whether this is post that may be calling you, please contact:

**Dave Farris : 07540 702400**





## St Matthew's Surbiton - Our Parish Profile



**Welcome** to an active parish with a beautiful, listed Victorian church building surrounded by leafy suburban London.

As a congregation, we have signed up to be “seven whole days” Christians, reminding us that our journey with God is one for every day, not just for Sunday.

We work hard at being a church which creates a warm, happy, and inclusive atmosphere and relates to everyone in the community wherever

they are, or are not, on their faith journey. We have strong links with the church school, which is across the road.

When a challenging Quinquennial report alerted us to the poor state of the tower and spire, the church and its community rolled up their sleeves to run a successful project to repair the damage. Equally we were ready to respond to the shock of the pandemic, undertaking the necessary steps to keep the faith, with contact networks, streamed services, zoom prayer groups and the like.

We are very concerned by the relentless global impact of the climate crisis. St Matthews has declared itself an eco-church and set-out to lead by example, adopting eco-standards for church operations, engaging relevant speakers, encouraging congregation members in taking even small steps to react to the crisis, and by sharing information. Our efforts have been recognised by awards for our eco work, and for church maintenance, by being removed the “At Risk” register and awarded substantial grants to repair and restore the building and, most importantly, by the people we serve.

We recognise the risks of losing our older children and young adults. St Matthew's is fully addressing the issue by concentrating resources on this age group, including them more in the daily life of the church.

We recognise the impacts of grief on individuals and families; the church has devised bereavement-friendly activities to support the grieving. We are not just a church which sings on Sunday mornings and waits for the next Sunday. We have a motivation of faith, hope and love which guides everything we do. There will be numerous challenges to come; we also appreciate that we have to develop in some areas, and will need encouragement for this.

Our church therefore seeks a dynamic, passionate, and people-friendly priest to lead us. We need a guiding light as we grow together in the shared journey of faith.

We look forward to welcoming you in person to our church.



## The View From The Pews

In preparing this Profile we consulted widely in the PCC and the congregations to establish where we are as a parish. We mapped relationships, assessed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) and enumerated gifts. The outcome is not neat or simple. We are a complex and diverse community with people at different stages on our journeys, but united by being a broad church, tolerant of differences.



Although we meet in a beautiful, listed, building we are very much of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, recognising and responding to the issues of the day. We try hard to welcome everyone, seek to be Christians seven days a week, recognise our flaws, relish helpful teaching. We are in partnership with our clergy, offering our input into running the church and its services. We welcome Bible-based teaching and strive to understand how it can be related to our lives in our times.

We want to share our building, and our experiences, with our wider community. To be more outward facing, to be a magnet for children and young adults. We want people to know that we are neither perfect or judgemental. We want to encourage those with little or no faith to be brave and ask questions. We also want to be of service to our neighbours, regardless of their own beliefs.

A now regular newcomer to our pews has commented:

*" I have experienced many churches and other places of worship throughout my time, but I have never encountered anything quite like our church for the warmth, generosity, genuineness and faithfulness of its people."*

We summarise here the results from the dozens of SWOT forms, updates to relationship charts, and over 80 cards giving views on St Matthew's "gifts".

### *Strengths and Opportunities:*

The consensus is that St Matthew's is a friendly, welcoming, church which is seen as inclusive, non-judgemental and accepting. Offering two styles of service, but with a common approach, which allows for a broad church appeal to delivering teaching. The involvement of the laity, including children and young people, in services was appreciated and developmental. The weaving of themes such as the climate emergency, the response to bereavement, the need for inclusion, the motto verse, throughout the church year were felt to be helpful, as was the series of *Why I Am A Christian* talks by congregation members. Fellowship beyond the structure of the Sunday services was also often mentioned, with examples such as the house groups, the choir, the embroiderers, and the 'away' events being given.

It was felt that there were opportunities to 'grow' the church through more use of the building through the week, to (re)building relationships with organisations, groups and individuals throughout the parish, as well as ensuring that we keep contact with occasional worshippers. There is a strong feeling that we need to increase efforts to hold on to young families, and especially children and young people.

*Weaknesses and threats:*

The building is large and costly to run and maintain, regular giving is not matching increasing costs, and the risk of further major work being needed on the building is ever present. The use of technology, for example in streaming and recording services, requires investment in equipment and, in the absence of skilled volunteers, professional help. Better website and social media are essential to communications.

A lot of work falls on the shoulders of a few volunteers, and this has been aggravated by the vacancy.

Although attendance is recovering towards pre-Covid levels, given the recognised national trend, failing numbers could be a serious issue. Practical issues may steer us away from God-led priorities, such as increasing prayer, running evening and weekday worship, undertaking mission and outreach.

*Relationships:*

Although there are some examples of good relationships (e.g. with St Matthew's School) there is a perception that currently, in post-Covid times, the church is not as outward-looking as it could be. The Friends scheme is little used, and relationships with, e.g. the British Legion, other schools in the parish, residents groups etc. need strengthening. A return to a programme of social and cultural events could increase the profile of the parish in the area, and stimulate enquiry and prepare the ground for mission.





## The Parish & Local Area

The census of 2018 showed the parish population as 9,596. The parish is only 0.6 of a square mile in area. Currently, there are 165 names on the parish electoral roll, of whom 60 are resident in the Parish. The parish is predominately residential with tightly packed tree-lined streets of pleasant Victorian and later housing. There are some larger villas within its boundaries, but many streets of semis and small terraces. There is a small social housing estate, and some secondary and tertiary shopping. The parish includes two pubs, a number of cafes and take-aways, a thriving British Legion Hall, five schools and a number of care homes, including the Southern branch of the Royal Star and Garter homes. The parish is well served by buses; Surbiton and Tolworth national rail stations are nearby.



Traditionally Surbiton has been a major commuter town for London, but this profile is changing as people increasingly work from home. With nearby Kingston Upon Thames being both a university and a college town, there are a fair number of people either studying or working in education. Primary and secondary schools in the borough are well regarded, and the area appeals to younger families. Nearby New Malden is a centre for the Korean community, and more locally there are specialist food shops for Eastern Europeans. St Matthew's aims to be a welcoming place for all people of all backgrounds.

Surbiton is part of the Royal Borough of Kingston for local government purposes, and Kingston and Surbiton constituency for parliamentary ones. The major shopping district is in Kingston town centre, which also has a marketplace, cinemas, the Rose Theatre, and some night-life. Surbiton town centre (in the adjoining parish of St Andrew's and St Mark's) has a smaller shopping district, including two supermarkets. The extensive Royal Parks of Richmond and Bushy are easily accessed. Hampton Court Palace is on the river Thames nearby. There are a number of smaller parks and recreation grounds in the area.



As the parish has access to the national rail network, and with frequent trains to Waterloo, easy access to Central London is possible. Heathrow and Gatwick airports are within easy travelling distance.

Most of the parish is now in the London ULEZ zone, but the whole of the parish is outside the congestion charge zone.



## Our Church Building

St Matthew's Surbiton was consecrated in 1875. It was built in open fields, anticipating the suburban spread brought about by the expansion of the railways. It is sited on a small plot, which has never been used as a graveyard. The Rectory adjoins it. Although largely unchanged structurally, the building was changed internally in 1974 to add a church room with kitchen, meeting area and toilets, and to close off the side aisles to provide three side rooms. A prayer corner has been set up in the transept. The church was given listed grade II status in 1983.



The serious problems with the tower and spire have been fully addressed and during that work the opportunity was taken to modernise the church room, provide better toilets including disabled facilities and upgrade the kitchen. The most recent Quinquennial confirmed that the work done had addressed all the previously identified problems.

The tower contains a service bell and a set of Ellacombe chimes with ringing frame. The heating in the building has been overhauled and the audio-visual facilities upgraded in recent times.

The 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2025 will be a focus for celebrating the history of the building and the parish, but also for highlighting where we are today and looking forward positively.



## The Rectory

The rectory is a detached house which was built in 2014 to the eco-standards specified by the Diocese. The house provides a minister's study/meeting room, with toilet, at its entrance to ensure that church matters do not intrude on the main house. The domestic accommodation includes a sitting room, dining room, large kitchen/breakfast room, four bedrooms, a wet room and another bathroom. There is ample storage throughout the building, and a large garage. There is a small, easy-to-maintain rear garden and hard standing and shrub beds to the front. The house has been designed to provide access facilities if needed.





## Our Church Hall



St Matthew's church hall (now known as the cornerHOUSE) is in Douglas Road, a few streets away from the church itself. The hall was built in 1908 and has served many parish and community functions since then. In the 1990s, it was repurposed as a community arts centre. A charitable Trust was set up with a simple 'licence to occupy' and given the full responsibility for the repair and maintenance of the building. The Trust draws its trustees from both the church and the local community, with the PCC having the right to appoint the majority of trustees at all times.

Local schools, charities providing support for people with learning and other difficulties, as well as small theatre and comedy companies and the like use the building. The Trust itself organises an annual pantomime, a series of one-act play festivals, art exhibitions, poetry events, a film club, and a number of other events.

The church occasionally uses the centre for courses, meetings and social activities. The website – [www.thecornerhouse.org](http://www.thecornerhouse.org) – gives a flavour of the busy programme of public events.



## Our Team

During the vacancy the parish has been indebted to the Revd Carolyn Lucas (non-stipendiary-minister licensed to the THiS benefice ) and the Rev William Allberry (a retired vicar who lives in the parish and has Permission to Officiate) for co-ordinating ordained input, and supporting lay leaders in running services. (Pictured below).



We are also indebted to our energetic church wardens. Other valued members of our leadership include our recently appointed director of music, our Southwark Pastoral Auxiliary, our parish safeguarding officers and many others drawn from the congregation. Our church administrator is a key resource, especially during the vacancy. We have a strong and engaged PCC which meets regularly and is being chaired by a member of the congregation.



## Our Services



The mainstays of the church week are the services on Sunday mornings. There are usually two services, a more traditional service at 9.00am with robed choir and organ music, and an all-age service at 10.45. Children are very much welcomed to the second service, and they usually leave for a range of children's activities after an action song, returning to 'report back' at the end of the service. Communion is shared at the first service every Sunday, except the third Sunday of the month when it is shared at the second. Since Covid the average attendance at the earlier service is around 40, and at the second about 90 (including children). The second services are live streamed and available for catch-up on our YouTube channel. Refreshments are served after each service, and fellowship encouraged.

Several times a year, the two Sunday services are combined (e.g. to celebrate Harvest Festival) and at other festive times extra services are held. In 2022 178 people came to our Christingle service. Occasional joint services are also held with the other two churches in THiS team.

Given the size of the church it is often used for services when hundreds of school children and staff come to enjoy the grandeur of the building, and to sing and pray. The recent record attendance was 510! In 2023 there were six Baptisms (2022 = three) but no Weddings (2022 = two). The St Matthews ministry team conducted twenty one funerals, either in the building or elsewhere (2022 = twelve.)



## Our Music

Music plays a vital role in supporting and enhancing our worship at St. Matthew's. Our Director of Music provides musical leadership at both Sunday services, playing organ/piano/keyboards and directing the choir/band. He is eager to work collaboratively and creatively with the new Rector to develop our musical abilities and musical programme further, including organising occasional come-and-sing events and services (such as choral evensongs), concerts, and other special musical offerings that enrich our worship and outreach. The PCC is fully supportive of the developing plans.



We currently have a small and dedicated choir that sings every Sunday at the 9am service. They are joined once a month by additional singers to form a "Super Choir". We plan to revive our past tradition of including children in our choir.

Our weekly all-age services feature a band with piano, guitar, keyboards/bass, drums, violin, and sometimes other instruments. We also aim to expand our team of singers to help lead worship songs at this service.

We are blessed with a three-manual pipe organ dating from 1875 and this is used each week. It is regularly tuned and maintained, though it needs some significant restoration work. We also have a fine grand piano within the main church, and a digital piano in one of our church rooms.





## Our Children and Young People



**Children and young people are central to the life of St Matthew's; they are at the heart of the church now, not just the future.**

We believe that St Matthew's or any other church is at its best when it includes all ages from the very young to the very elderly.

We delight in the number of children and young people (CYP) who come regularly to St Matthew's and our groups are set up to ensure that they know they are full members of the church from their earliest days.

Our well supported and resourced groups operate in church weekly (other than Fuel) during the 10.45 service.

Unless stated below, the groups are run on a rota basis by a wonderful team of dedicated, vetted and inducted volunteers to whom we are so grateful.

Each volunteer is aligned to a specific age category and gets to know all the CYP in their group. All the children are encouraged to participate in the services. We are also currently blessed with a short-term, part time, attachment of a trained youth worker.

### *Groups:*

Newborn to third birthday - Crèche (supervised by parents)

Age 3-7 (until the end of KS1) - Scramblers

Age 7-11 (year 3-6) - Explorers

Age 11 + (year 7-10) – Pathfinders

We are also active in THiS groups ; Fuel (ages 11-14) and Ignite (15+).



# St Matthew's Church of England Primary School

Our school vision is 'to enable our whole school community to live life in all its fullness' Based on John 10:10

We are a popular two-form-entry C of E Primary School for 4–11 year-olds, just a short walk from the church. All staff and governors, many with church connections, work together to create a sense of belonging within a warm, joyful, stimulating, caring, learning environment where we 'believe, achieve and succeed'. We've appreciated previous Vicars/Rectors playing an active role in school life, including collective worship, governing body/Faith Team involvement, spiritual support, Diocesan connections, and Church services for major festivals and Leavers' service.



Our Children's Faith Team, building on these experiences, share qualities they would like to see in our new vicar. They believe the new vicar should be:

- kind but firm
- have loud voice, so they can talk about God to lots of people. They need to be brave to do this too.
- energetic and happy
- committed to their faith
- able to deliver fun worships that everyone enjoys
- live life in all its fullness
- reflect our school motto: "believing, succeeding, achieving"
- be informative
- enjoy singing
- 

2023 highlights have been our Eco-school achievements and gaining a Platinum Award for Outdoor Play and Learning – 'now one of the best outdoor play learning environments in the world!'

To find out more, please visit our website: [www.stmatthews.kingston.sch.uk](http://www.stmatthews.kingston.sch.uk)



## Eco Church



All at St Matthew's are signed up to the need to respond to the Climate Emergency under the fifth mark of mission: striving to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth. Led by an enthusiastic team, their work on worship, land, buildings, lifestyle and engagement with the wider and global community led to the achievement of A Rocha's Eco Church Silver Award. A largely new team is now maintaining that standard and preparing for the far more difficult task of seeking Gold. The group is aware always of how crucial this existential challenge is to achieving social justice, and indeed all the other marks of mission.



## Discipleship

*Seven Whole Days* is at the heart of teaching/learning in St Matthews. The concept that we are Christians 24/7 is rooted in both regular Sunday services when the congregations are invited to share their hopes and concerns about the coming week's issues at work, with family and others, and give thanks and share the good news of God's presence and answered prayer. The ethos is amplified by the *Why I am a Christian* talks series each August where congregation members share their faith and life journeys.



Good use is also made of lay resources in organising and leading services. In this way the congregations have further opportunities to see that serving God in worship is not something reserved for ordained clergy.

There are five active weekly house/home groups where prayer and bible study are linked to fellowship and life experiences. The parish also runs occasional courses for inquirers, and those unable to meet regularly. We revived the tradition of an annual Motto Verse in 2019. We use each year's Verse widely throughout the year, and also as the basis for study material. (2024's Motto Verse is "Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it." 1 Corinthians 12:27)

Once a year we have an away day or an away weekend where we invite a guest speaker to lead us in worship, teaching and spiritual growth. The away days are in a local school, or a church, which make it easier for young families to attend. The away weekends are held in a comfortable hotel a little further away. These occasions are a great way to meet fellow parishioners on a sustained basis and to have serious (and not so serious) conversations.

We have an active Discipleship and Ministry team working to develop this area.



## Caring For Others

In January 2021 a new focus on being a Bereavement Friendly Church was agreed. We offer one to one support to those who have lost a loved one whose funeral that has been taken by clergy at St Matthew's. Also by running The Bereavement Journey course twice a year and by facilitating a monthly Bereavement Cafe, and leading a monthly Bereavement Walking Group.

We have an annual service of Remembering and Thanksgiving to reflect on and give thanks for those we have loved but can no longer see.

We have a Pastoral Team which addresses the pastoral needs of the wider church family. Services of Holy Communion are held at The Royal Star and Garter Home, Milverton, Southborough, Bourne House and Rosclare care homes each month, and Holy Communion is given in the home to those who can no longer come to church.



## Outreach and Mission

St Matthews members commit money and time to a multiplicity of outreach and mission activities. It is fair to say, however, that currently there is no over-arching plan.

There is an active pastoral team which looks out for members and parishioners in difficulty. There is regular and sustained engagement with St Matthew's School and through this with pupils, their families and school staff.

Church members set up and run a twice-monthly Singalong session off-site for carers, their charges and supporters; this development has been recognised with a national grant. The church also organises annual community carol singing off-site.

The church has recently agreed for two charities to meet regularly in the church building. The congregation's financial and human resources support engagement with many other local organisations including the food bank, local homelessness initiatives, street pastors in Kingston and a charity working in Malawi but based in the parish.

We set up a "Friends of St Matthews Church" group when we had to make major repairs to the building. The aim is to keep neighbours who did not come to church aware of the progress of the work. We now have 60 local households who support the church, whilst choosing not to take part in services. They value the building as local heritage, as a community hub, as a venue for concerts.





## How We Communicate

We publish a weekly notices sheet, which is emailed to subscribers, made available as hard copy at services, stocked at the back of church, and included on the website. The main means of contact with the wider parish is through our website <https://www.stmatthewskt6.org/>

We also make recordings of our all-age service available on our YouTube channel. We publicise special events, and our Christmas services, through leaflets which volunteers from the congregations deliver.

We have a good working relationship with local paper, The Good Life, <https://thegoodlifesurbiton.co.uk/> which will carry news stories from the church. We have a noticeboard in the cornerHOUSE and use St Matthew's School as a news distribution method.



## Supporting Groups and Teams

We have a number of practical groups and teams running including:

- a maintenance team which also supervises a project to renovate the flooring in the building,
- an embroidery group which makes banners and other textile artworks,
- gardeners who work with the eco-church team
- flower arrangers
- a whole series of rota groups to look after welcoming, refreshing and running services
- a newly formed social activities group to revive a programme of music, quizzes, film shows and other popular activities to which the wider community is invited. (This last group is also preparing celebrations for the building's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary.)





## Our Finances

Our finances are managed by the Treasurer with assistance from other volunteers. A finance committee reviews the finances periodically and makes recommendations to the PCC. Figures for 2023 (including both restricted and unrestricted funds, rounded to the nearest thousand).

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
Giving	£113,000	Parish Share	£83,000
Tax recoverable	£26,000	Insurance	£16,000
Legacies	£48,000	Mission/Charity (Ext)	£14,000
Rent	£16,000	Gas, electricity, water	£14,000
Interest	£7,000	Major works/repairs	£12,000
Others	£9,000	Administration	£10,000
		Maintenance	£7,000
		Music	£7,000
		Others	£10,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£219,000</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£173,000</b>

### CASH/INVESTMENTS

Property	£680,000
Cash/Deposits/CCLA	£244,000

NB. A full set of accounts can be made available on request.



## The Role of the Vicar of St Matthew's Surbiton

St Matthew's has a strong record of being an open-hearted and flexible church. The most recent incumbent, the Revd Helen Hancock, enabled the further development of St Matthew's as a church community which is responsive to teaching and to challenges. We are looking forward prayerfully and expectantly to working with a new incumbent who will lead us and continue the journey with us, as we seek to be seven whole day Christians who are relevant to, and have a role in, our wider community in the parish and the area.

We are looking for a vicar who will:

- ensure that we continue to grow as a friendly, welcoming, inclusive, non-judgemental and accepting community
- develop the existing services and help us explore the scope for further services
- grow the congregations in numbers and faith, developing further spiritual life and prayer in all we do
- prioritise a creative and fruitful ministry among children, young adults and young families
- encourage and enable members of the congregation in living their faith and sharing the Good News
- increase the profile of the church in the parish and surrounding area, ensuring that St Matthew's is known in the community as a good neighbour





# St George's Church, Tolworth



St George's Church, Tolworth is a small, friendly, caring and ethnically diverse church family of about 62 people including children. Our leader is the Revd. Nicholas Lebey who is a pioneer curate in his third year of training. There is a strong possibility that Nicholas will be able to continue in ministry at St George's and in the team after the completion of his curacy. The details are being worked through.

The Parish covers much of Tolworth, with a population of 9,489 and is an ethnically diverse community reflected in the 50 plus languages

spoken in the local schools. There has been a significant ethnic demographical change in recent years. There is a cross section of all age brackets in the community which is reflected in our church membership.

## Church Community

As a church community, we value:

- Going deeper in our faith and worshipping together
- Fellowship, friendship, shared meals, and special celebrations
- Supporting each other through difficulties
- Church members of every age and background
- Creative mission opportunities to engage the community and grow our church
- Jesus at the heart of everything we do



Our vision and desire are to become:

***A church at the heart of our community, sharing Jesus and growing in discipleship***

## Worship and Discipleship

As we are a small church, we want to build and go deeper with what we have, keeping our Sunday morning services accessible for those coming in with no church background and moving forward in our service styles so that they are culturally appropriate for the new generation.

Our weekly services are at 10am and have a mixture of styles and focus. The monthly All Age Service is short and interactive. Second and fourth Sundays are with Holy Communion blending traditional and contemporary worship. Third Sundays are Worship Services with informal contemporary worship. Having no regular instrumentalists, we sing to pre-recorded music and images. We long for live music and a band would be fantastic! But God said to us "start with what you have" and with much joy we now have a wonderful acapella group of church members who sing while we take communion.

We are learning to share testimonies of what God is doing in our lives to build each other up in faith and want to do more of this.

Prayer ministry is offered after every service, provided by lay members, and this is taken up nearly every week.

Every quarter, our Encounter Service provides an opportunity to go deeper and grow in our faith and relationship with God. We meet for afternoon tea at 4pm which provides time for fellowship followed by a service with live worship, teaching, prayer and inspiring Christian stories from people outside of our church.

Our Sunday School group, Shine is for primary age children. The older children join the THiS Team groups; Fuel (ages 11-14) and Ignite (15+). Our children and young people are such a blessing for us, and we want to give them a strong foundation in their faith.

The Silver Threads group for retired members, as well as Fellers for men and Radiance for ladies provide opportunities for fellowship and learning and growing together in our faith.

Our strength is our all member ministry. Everyone is involved in some way from repairs, cooking, coffees, welcoming, visiting, leading services, teaching, praying, and so much more. We want to continue grow our giftings and encourage each person to find and develop their ministries.

#### Mission and Serving our Community

We are blessed with wonderful facilities, a good sized hall, a big lawn for outdoor activities as well as a Sanctuary that can be rearranged for multi-purpose use. Our hall is fully booked and has regular use by 11 different community groups.

We have been working hard at becoming more known in the local community through our annual Meet Your Neighbour family fun day. Over 450 people came to the event in 2023. We also have our Wiggles toddler group meeting weekly in term time, Light a Candle to Remember (remembrance service), Community Carols, Christingle and regularly take part in the Tolworth Broadway Christmas events.

This year, we have been invited to sing carols at Signal Park, a new housing development and we are praying that this will provide an opening to newcomers to the area.

Thousands of homes are being built in our parish and it is expected that our parish will grow by 30% by 2030. We are prayerfully considering how we can build on our current activities and events so that we can do our best in serving the community and sharing Jesus with them.





# St Paul's Church, Hook

## An introduction to St Paul's Church:

The parish of St Paul's covers Hook and part of Chessington. We are known at St Paul's as a very welcoming, supportive and inclusive congregation; our members are active and involved in many aspects of church and community life. Whilst our members are generally older than the broader community of the



parish, there is a range of ages, with some young families regularly attending on Sundays. Regular attendance has not returned to pre-Covid numbers, but the congregation are committed to re-building: for instance, regular children's groups have been re-established in the last 6 months.

## Church Life:

There are 109 members on the Electoral Roll with an average of 45 attending services on a Sunday and 15 at the Thursday morning service. St Paul's is a church community who value the

Eucharist; there is a said Eucharist every Thursday at 10am; our present Sunday worship pattern is as follows:

Week	
1	8.45 said Eucharist. 10am All-age worship.
2	10am Common Worship Eucharist
3	10am Family Eucharist
4	10am Common Worship Eucharist
5	10am Family Eucharist

On weeks 2-5 we have children's groups in the small hall beside the church. We recently installed a modern AV system, which we use to stream most Sunday services on YouTube.

Our yearly pattern includes other special worship gatherings; this starts with a Patronal Service in January followed by lunch. As part of the THS Team, joint services are held a couple of times a year, and the clergy 'pulpit swap' twice a year. At the end of September, we celebrate Harvest Festival not only with a special service but with lunch to follow; our donated gifts support the local food-bank, which we support as a church with weekly donations.

At the end of October, a special thanksgiving and memorial service is held to commemorate those loved ones recently passed from the congregation and community and other loved ones also to be remembered. There is a service for Armistice Day on 11th November and Remembrance Sunday on the nearest Sunday to it. Both are held in the churchyard around the war memorial at the front of the church with wreath laying by representatives from the community i.e. the British Legion, the Police and the younger groups, including the school, Guides and Brownies. These are well attended by local people, many of them non-church goers who stand on the pavement outside.

We have a crib and Christingle service on Christmas Eve and it is traditional for some adults and the children to dress as Nativity characters to bring to life the Christmas Story. This has become a much-welcomed community event as has our traditional carol service. We also host a traditional carol service for 3 local schools. The pastoral team offer the housebound and residential home-based congregation home Communion and others are visited to offer friendship and concerned loving support.

Our midweek activities include 2 Bible studies; one as a home group in the daytime; the other at the church in the evening. Typically, there are also one or two lay-led evening courses a year, which are well-attended. On a Monday afternoon there is a Knit and Natter group also open to non-church members and the knitted items go to the "Born too Soon" group at Kingston Hospital. We have an active Mothers Union with meetings held monthly in the daytime but with the occasional evenings as a special event. The men's group meets four or five times a year.

In November we run a winter fair, appreciated by the community and which involves many of the congregation. We also have an annual box opening day with lunch for the Children's Society. There are Scout and Guide groups that have valued links with the church.

We are members of the local CHAT (Chessington and Hook Acting together) ecumenical group. This consists of St Paul's and St Mary's CofE churches, Chessington Methodist Church and St Catherine of Siena Roman Catholic Church. The clergy meet for lunch about three times per year. We hold the following services and events as joint CHAT events: Ash Wednesday Holy Communion; Maundy Thursday Holy Communion; Good Friday 'Walk of Witness', and Ascension Day. We value these ecumenical links and the relations between these four churches are warm.

### **Church Buildings:**

The current church building was built in 1882 and consecrated a year later. It is a red brick building with a beautiful east window depicting the conversion and later life of Saint Paul. The churchyard is very well



maintained and amongst the gravestones are Commonwealth War Graves. There are also two memorial gardens for the burial of ashes. The parish was originally rural: consecrated with the first church building in 1839.

At the side of the church there is a small meeting room (with modest kitchen and toilet) which accommodates many of the mid-week gatherings, refreshments after services and children's work during services. It is also available for hire. There is also a small office, principally for the use of the Parish

Administrator.

### **St Paul's School:**

Just over the road is St Paul's Church Primary School with which the church has strong links. The children take part in several services throughout the year. There are two more schools, one at each end of the parish: a primary and a senior school. Both of these have occasional services in the church for their

pupils.

St Paul's School is a single form entry Church of England Primary School with a strong Christian ethos and foundation. The previous vicar of St Paul's was very committed to the school. He was the chair of governors and attended all key school events. He also took collective worship at the school every Wednesday, served on the faith group and became very well-known in the school community. In addition to the weekly collective worship the key seasonal school services were held in the Church, with services at Easter, Christmas and Harvest, and with the year 6 leaver's service also held in church. In addition, the vicar also took occasional classes and led them for special teaching either in the school or in the church.

### **The Parish of St Paul's Hook:**

The parish of Hook and Chessington is suburban in character, typical of outer-London; a variety of housing developments having taken place from the pre-war period through to the present day. The Hook Library has excellent facilities. Several shopping parades throughout the parish have cafés, local supermarkets, hairdressers, independent grocery stores, charity shops etc. There is a Post Office and a good bus service to Kingston, Tolworth, Surbiton and further out to Epsom and Dorking.

There is a parish hall roughly 500 metres from the church, owned by the diocese and administered by a sub-committee of the PCC. This was built for the wider community and hosts a daily pre-school and other community groups. The Lettings Clerk also uses the small office at the church.

### **Parish Finances:**

For the congregation's size, there is always a good response to financial appeals; whether it be for increases in regular giving or for outside charities. We have a Lent Appeal every year and the collections at our Christmas carol service and at Harvest are also given to charity.

Next year our Parish Share payment to Southwark Diocese will be £49,412 and our budget is usually approximately £80,000. We try to keep our current account balance at between £25 - £30,000 and our surplus for 2023 was about £8,000 thanks to a one-off donation. We have a small investment account of £8,500.

**Person Specification:** i.e. What gifts and qualities are we looking for in our new team rector?

We need a Godly leader who can lead various types of worship including traditional Eucharist services, biblical/prayerful meditations, lively modern Praise and worship services that are child and family friendly. He or she should preach biblically based messages that will lead others to Jesus and help them to be strengthened in their faith in Christ.

They should have a commitment to outreach and mission that enables and encourages members of the congregation to reach out with the Good News of Jesus. This should be coupled with a desire to show compassion and sensitivity, a heart for the community and a commitment to encourage the church to care for the environment in which we live.

For example:

- A commitment to all the churches in the team
- A gifted biblical preacher
- An inspirational leader
- Able to communicate with all age groups



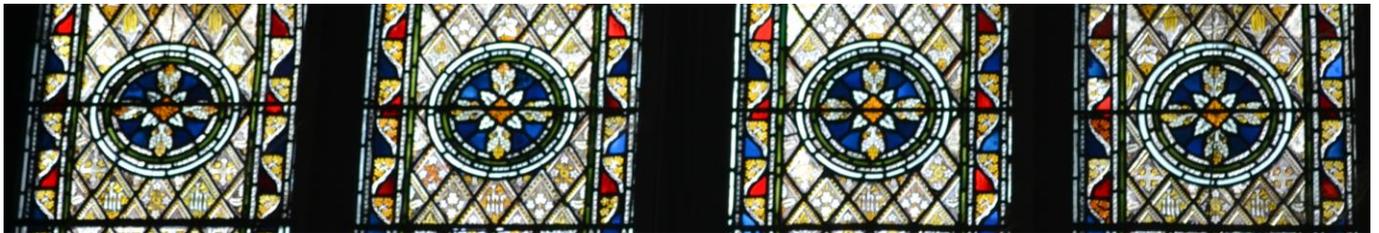
## Tolworth Hook and Surbiton Team Ministry

The Team Ministry comprises three churches, St George's Tolworth, St Paul's Hook and St Matthew's Surbiton. The Team was inaugurated on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2016.

The three churches work well together. They have different characteristics and local needs and challenges. They have their own ministry teams and PCCs and control their own finances.

The Team clergy meet regularly and: hold joint services annually, run older children's groups and study courses, a men's group etc. across the three constituent churches.

The Team Rector provides an element of strategic leadership and support but the day to day leadership in each parish is rooted in the Team Vicars and individual PCCs.





## The Role of Team Rector

To date the THiS Team has run with a light touch from the Rector. This recognised that the constituent churches each have a different character and are separate churches with their own Team Vicars and PCCs making the local church decisions.

The churches work together when it makes sense e.g. clergy meet regularly, joint services annually, arranging pulpit swaps, older children groups, Thy Kingdom Come together etc.

The team works together well, with the Team Rector along with the Team Vicars and church members being the catalysts to work together where that makes strategic sense and supports the wider mission and ministry of the Team. It's a partnership based on collaboration and mutual support.

The new Team Rector will be able to help the Team explore further possible areas of collaboration and working together.

### **What gifts and qualities are we looking for in our new team rector?**

We are seeking a godly leader, confident in their own faith and able to embrace and encourage others in theirs.

He or she will:

- Preach with imagination and clarity, rooted in scripture and able to lead others to Jesus and strengthening them in their faith in Christ.
- Be able to lead worship in a range of settings, including more formal eucharistic services, biblical/prayerful meditations, informal praise and worship and services that are child and family friendly.
- Have a commitment to outreach and mission that enables and encourages members of the congregations to reach out with the Good News of Jesus.
- Have a strong ability to show compassion and sensitivity, a heart for the community, and a commitment to encourage the church to care for the environment in which we live.



**Thank you for reading this profile**