



KPC Jan 2023

PARISH PROFILE 2023
Keston Parish Church,
London Borough of Bromley, Diocese of
Rochester

Church Road, Keston, BR2 6HT

<http://www.kestonparishchurch.org.uk/>



North aspect of the Church

KESTON PARISH CHURCH is looking for a new incumbent

Following the retirement of our part time incumbent, we are looking for a new part-time (3 days per week plus Sundays, half stipend) Rector to lead our congregation. While we are open-minded about the personal qualities needed for successful ministry, we would hope that, for Keston, they would include the following:

- Energy and an out-going personality, with an ability to enliven and rejuvenate, but not alienate constituent parts of the congregation or Keston community.
- A spiritual leader of faith, who can rise to the challenge of making the teachings of Jesus relevant to today's world and the requirements of its people.
- An appreciation of the values and merits of collaborative leadership style, while possessing the ability to delegate.
- An understanding and willingness to practise pastoral care in the 21st century.
- An interest in, and willingness to engage with, our Church of England primary school.
- Support / home visits for the older residents who may be housebound, for communion



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and worship.



View of Keston Ponds from Fishponds Road

KESTON – THE PARISH AND THE COMMUNITY

Keston is a small community in the rural commuter belt of South East London, approximately 13 miles from Central London and part of the London Borough of Bromley. It has 1,350 households and approximately 3,000+ inhabitants, of whom 71 are on the Electoral Roll of Keston Parish Church.

Keston consists of family houses around a common land Green with two pubs and two restaurant/ cafés, Post office/convenience store, Farm shop, Barber and Hairdresser, Pet and garden supplier and attractive woodland with some farmland, as well as the well-known Keston Ponds. The Church is situated in the centre of the historical and geographical parish footprint, where the ancient centre of Keston, originally dating back to Roman times existed, and about a mile south of today's village centre; here the Post Office and four shops enhance the village character.

The Parish is also home to the Keston Church of England Primary School, part of the Aquinas C of E Trust, within the village and a large Boys' Secondary School, Ravens Wood, is located directly adjacent to the Parish's northern boundary. Other good schools, including 2 grammar schools, are within fairly easy access in Bromley, and neighbouring boroughs.

The community can be described as mainly affluent, with a mix of older people and younger families

The social life of the community is centred around the Green, with its two pubs, restaurants / cafe and the shops, while the different clubs and associations, (including the Women's Institute, Residents Association, Friends of Keston Common group and Book group), make



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much use of the Keston Village Hall, and our Keston Parish Church Hall. The local groups organise an annual Countryside Day on the Green, which is popular with residents and visitors from all over the Borough, (as well as a Boxing Day event).

Bromley South, Hayes and Orpington stations, all within easy reach, allow speedy access to central London, which is approximately 20 - 45 minutes away.



The congregation of Keston Parish Church in June 2022

THE CONGREGATION OF KESTON PARISH CHURCH

The regular congregation could be described as “middle of the road”, enjoying the comfort of the familiar, but open to new ideas and changes where it is appropriate. The P.C.C., with 12 members, works well together and, working within a committee structure, is supportive of its Rector.

WORSHIP

On Sundays –

10.00 am. Holy Communion. Common Worship Order One. With Robed choir.

- Average attendance at this service, (not including Festivals when it is higher) is 56. Children occasionally attend and number between 1 – 5.
- On the first Sunday of the month the service is less formal, including worship songs and keyboard instead of the organ.
- On the third Sunday we offer Prayer for Healing and Wholeness during communion.

We would like to reinstate the midweek service as well as a monthly Evensong using Book of Common Prayer.



OCCASIONAL OFFICES

Below is indicative information for the following two years at Keston Parish Church: 2021-22.

Number of baptisms - 6, Weddings -10, Funerals/crematorium - 13, Burial of Ashes - 19.

- Attitudes regarding marriage after divorce, is something we would want to discuss with any new incumbent, but there are no real concerns being raised in either the PCC or the Church as a whole.
- The Parish view on Living in Love and Faith (LLF) we don't want to directly answer this question currently as the 'Living in Love and Faith' process had yet to be completed. - 'We need to honour the process of the General Synod'. This is recognising Human Identity - Sexuality Gender and Relationship, we would want to work with our new incumbent in this regard as both a PCC and a Church.

The Choir

We are proud of our adult choir of some dozen members that sings at the 10 am service where they often offer an anthem and special music during communion.

First Sunday Worship is led by an informal singing group who sometimes introduce new songs to the congregation.

Children and young people

There was a successful Messy Church which closed due to the COVID pandemic. We are open to the possibility of investigating mixed-ecology /fresh expressions of church to see a new generation of worshippers thrive alongside the more traditional.

The annual Christingle service is very well supported, in **2019** with over 51 children and 95 adults present, **2020** was a COVID year, and in **2021**, we had distancing in place so only 25 Children and 30 adults attended.

2022 however had 73 Children and 109 Adults (Total-182).



Christingle service Dec 2022 (182 in attendance)



TEACHING

Children

Keston Church of England Primary School has a welcoming school community that values the Church's involvement. A weekly act of collective worship led by the Rector has been well received by children and staff. The Church "hosts" an end-of-primary-school service for leavers from Year 6 every July, and is involved with the school's Carol Service at Christmas. The school is relatively small with usually just a one-form intake.

Adults. During Lent, we have enjoyed weekly teaching and discussion meetings.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Currently we enjoy prayer walks twice per month, a book reading fellowship and a Christian library.

FELLOWSHIP (Parish Life)

An active social committee organises events throughout the year on a fairly regular pattern, some of which are fund-raising enterprises. There is a Harvest Lunch, a Beating-the-Bounds walk with tea, themed social get-togethers, quizzes / music nights- all very cohesive and well supported by Church members and the wider community. Pub Socials are held every six weeks, held locally in one of the pubs to attract members and their partners who may not be Church attendees.

We also have a LIFT group, (Ladies in Fellowship Together), where we encourage our female congregation members to come along with their female friends, and a Men's group to encourage meetings for social enjoyment.

In addition, we hold regular mental health / wellbeing coffee mornings with a local mental health professional attending.

ADMINISTRATION

The Parish employs an Administrative Assistant and Hall manager, there is also a cleaner, Gardner, Organist / Choir master and a Verger. Church cleaning and some grounds work are undertaken by volunteers.

MINISTRY PROVISION

We are fortunate to have a Licenced Lay Minister and currently one member of the congregation is completing a Bishop's certificate course.

OUTREACH

Remembrance Day

Organised by the Church, a walk from the village to the War Memorial for an Act of Remembrance each year attracts a large number of local residents - approximately 500.



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Parish Magazine

Edited by a dedicated member of the congregation, with contributions from local people and material from other sources, this is published by the Church and distributed bi-monthly without cost to all households in the Parish with a circulation of 1,350 - we are fortunate to be able to put Christian content into every home on a regular basis. As well as Church activities, it reflects the wider interests of the village and surrounding areas, and is clearly valued by its readership, since annual requests for financial contributions towards its production costs bring in a substantial sum, and with these, and some advertising, it covers its costs.

Addiction Groups

We host both Alcoholics and Cocaine Anonymous groups

Our Church web site <http://www.kestonparishchurch.org.uk/> is updated regularly.

ORPINGTON DEANERY

The Parish Church of Keston sits towards the edge of the Orpington Deanery within the Archdeaconry of Bromley and Bexley, even though the postal address says 'Kent'!

The Deanery is diverse, stretching from Biggin Hill to St Mary Cray, made up of parishes of very mixed wealth levels, with the IMD scores ranging from 1 right up to 9. There is a lot of urbanisation in the North and West of the Deanery, much of the Deanery is suburban, including Keston, with the South and East being more rural.

The Ecclesial traditions of the parishes are also varied, ranging from Anglo-Catholic to Evangelical Charismatic, all parishes support the ministry of women and none have passed resolutions. It's fair to say that the parishes work well together as a deanery.

Deanery Synod meetings are often open meetings, doing together better than doing it alone – recent focus has been on The Archbishops' commission on Racism, and Environmental issues, as well as LLF. Chapter meets regularly and is well supported, focusing on praying together. We hold Chapter retreats every few years, spending time getting to know each other and supporting each other in ministry.

"I've been Area Dean for just over 4 years, Vicar of Cudham and Downe for 10 years, and in full time ministry for 30 years".

"I look forward to welcoming a new colleague to Keston, my neighbouring parish. The new incumbent can be assured of my prayerful and practical support".

Rev John Musson, Vicar of Cudham and Downe, Area Dean of Orpington,

Assistant DDO Diocese of Rochester.

Deanery synod

At present, the parish sends one representative to synod meetings.



THE PARISH BUILDINGS



The Church and Hall from Church Road

Our Church building is small, (seats 120 adults) and parts date back to medieval times (1206). It is simple, ancient, intimate and lovely in our eyes. It is surrounded by an old Churchyard, (including x3 War Graves), which is now closed, but retains a plot for the burial of cremated remains (Garden of Remembrance).

The Church hall, built thirty years ago (1992), is attached to the Church with access through the south doorway. It has a well-equipped kitchen, storage space for chairs, tables etc., toilet facilities, together with a Choir Vestry and Upper Room, with more storage space, reached by a spiral staircase. The Main Hall and Upper Room have regular users. These include exercise classes, Choir practice, dog training, baby and toddler sensory group, A.A. and C.A. meetings, as well as Church events. There are also frequent children's parties at the weekends. The various hirers contribute to the income of the Church.

We now have a large car-park, solar lighting in the car-park, woodland walk, and inside the Church and Hall we have converted to eco-friendly lighting.

The last quinquennial inspection in 2022 found the fabric of the buildings, on the whole, in excellent condition.

A summary of the history of our Church building and its features is available on our website.

<http://www.kestonparishchurch.org.uk/>



The Rectory is at 40 The Dale, pictured below, which is a four-bedroom detached property with a large study on the ground floor, living room, dining room and conservatory.



Rectory at 40 The Dale

FINANCE

The Church finances have recently been difficult, due to reduced income and this has resulted in the temporary suspension of our target of donating 10% of our unrestricted income to charitable causes every year. Following a review of regular giving and other recent donations we have been able to build up restricted reserves, rebalance the books and now have adequate funds to cover even major structural repairs, as they become necessary in the future.

A copy of the P.C.C.'s 2021-22 report and statutory accounts is available on request.

THE FUTURE

It is the profound wish of all the Keston Parish Family that our Church should continue to proclaim the Christian message to future generations, with vigour and inspiration, offering the pastoral care and support enabled by our faith in a loving God, and that we should find a leader to direct and assist us in this purpose.



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This is our:

Vision Statement:

- **To welcome and embrace all who come into this beautiful ancient place of peace to be blessed, healed and equipped by God for the challenges of everyday life.**

Mission Statement:

- **We seek to work within the wider Church as we continue to be a Christian presence, reaching out with God's love to our own community.**
- **We are committed to our own spiritual growth, through worship, prayer and Bible study, whilst staying open to the Spirit of Jesus so that we will show the fruits of the spirit in our everyday lives.**
- **We want to utilise our building to provide a place where all who come are welcome and have the opportunity to encounter God, in a variety of ways relevant to the needs of today.**