

Christ Church Orpington



Parish Profile 2024





This Is Us

We are an evangelical, single parish church, set in a diverse suburb near the London/Kent border. Our heart is to seek the next chapter of God's plan for our church community and for our local community. We have a variety of worship styles across different services, but overall we may be described as medium to low Anglican.

Within this profile about us, there are many examples of activities and ministries. We have structured it using creative pieces made by members of our congregation. It is also organized thematically, showing the wide range of what we do and our values, which are drawn directly from the artwork themselves.



Looking forwards, we are confident that God has a plan for our next chapter. We are listening to learn more about its details. We are ambitious for growth, both spiritually and numerically. There is a generous supply of positivity, energy and excitement about the future of Christ Church Orpington. A new leader will have much to tap into, ideally providing support and guidance to this. We are receptive to learning more about how to be loving Christians in a changing social environment.

The challenges that we face are building the next generation and being the Christian Light to the Community around us. Our numbers have not recovered from Covid. Christ Church is a busy church which touches our community at many points. We are positioned within a diverse residential area and our desire is to serve our community both practically and spiritually. A rich cross section of the community enter our buildings every week and experience a warm welcome.

A new leader will find an active, vibrant, caring and resourceful church family. We serve the poorest in our community. We have excellent church premises and halls, enabling various ministries. Our finances, HR, governance and safeguarding processes are mature and established. Our people are supportive, faithful and generous. We value our unity, which we have. As the new vicar you will feel loved, listened to, supported and wanted by a congregation and leadership team ready to embrace and grow with you and God's plans for this church.

We do hope that this profile gives a flavour of what we are all about. We hope that God is calling you to play a leading part in it and may the Lord bless you as you consider this.

- Dave & Pieter (Church Wardens)

**Devoted to Christ,
Dedicated to Community**

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Christ Proclaiming



Faithful biblical teaching, symbolised by our mosaic lectern, is central to our life as a church. Christ Church considers itself to be a 'beacon on the hill' to our local community, but also further afield. Here we describe the church and the parish, alongside its setting in Orpington. Our tech team supports the clear proclamation of the Word during our worship services. We are committed to evangelism, as evidenced in our support for various mission partners around the world, and we run an Alpha course roughly each year.

Community and Parish

Christ Church began in 1938 when a new housing area in the south of Orpington, known unofficially then as Goddington, was the site of a new evangelical church. At that time there were around 4000



people and 900 homes in the area. It started with a church hall in Charterhouse Road used for worship and Sunday schools, until the church building was completed and consecrated in August 1940. Since then, there have been six incumbents in the church's 84-year history.

Orpington is situated on the south-east side of London. It is in the London Borough of Bromley, a large borough with many demographic areas. Orpington is at the south-east corner of the borough close to the Kent countryside and the M25. Christ Church is situated in an area which grew in the 1930s with the advent of the railways.

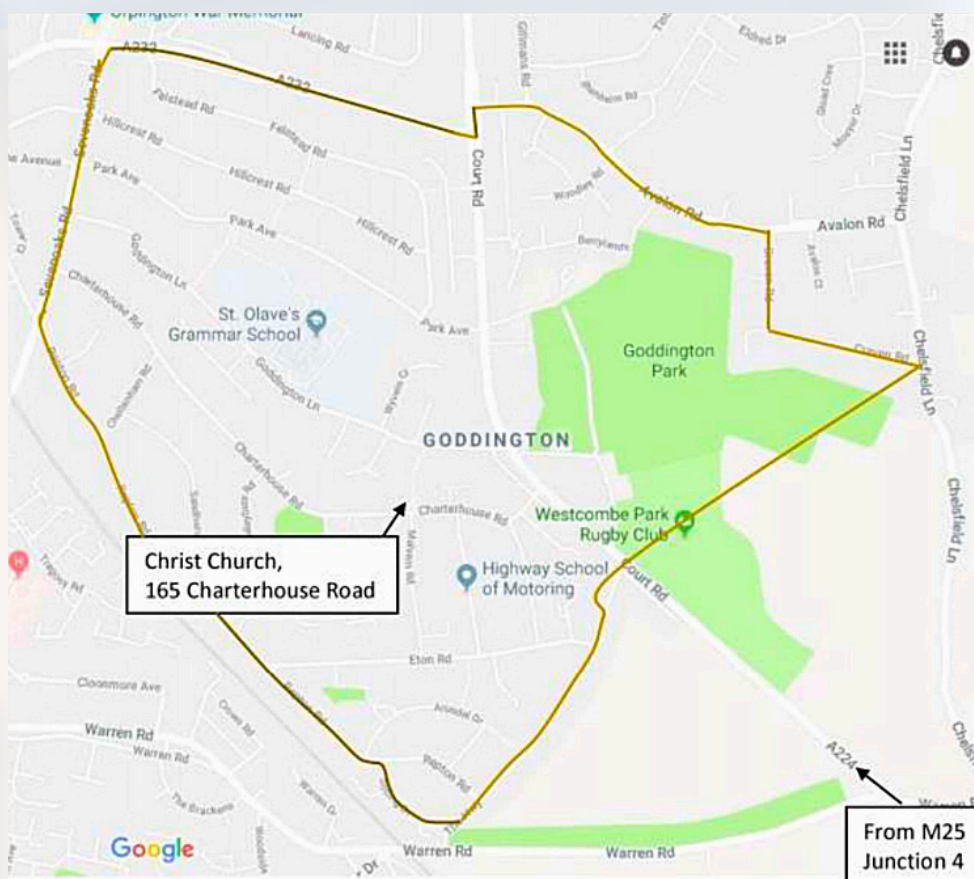
The density of population in the area is average and there are areas of wide-open space. The High Street is Orpington's most dominant physical landmark and is typical of an outer London suburb. Facilities are adequate with many major shops represented, although some street stores are now located in a shopping complex about a mile north of the High Street. The High Street is dominated by a large supermarket and a sizeable number of restaurants and coffee shops. There is a college alongside the High Street. Recreation facilities in Orpington include a large sports centre with a swimming pool and several gymnasia. Priory Gardens is the town's largest park and hosts a number of community events throughout the year. London is only 15 minutes away by train and there is good access to the motorway network from the nearby M25. There is an excellent local bus service.

The nature of the area can be gained from a look at the following estimates provided by the Diocese for the parish based on the 2021 Census.

Age (in years)	0 - 4	5 - 14	15 - 29	30 - 44	45 - 64	65+
	5%	12%	14%	18%	27%	24%

Ethnicity	White	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other
	80%	10%	4%	4%	2%

This means that the parish is significantly whiter in ethnic origin than the country generally, and much less ethnically diverse than parishes further into London or even other parts of Bromley. The diocese also estimates that 31% of households have dependent children and the Index of Multiple Deprivation is 86%.



Approximately 6,400 people live in the nearly 2,500 homes in the parish. It is estimated that 85% of the housing is owner occupied (including shared ownership), the remainder being a mixture of Housing Association and ex-council houses. It is estimated that 9% of the households live in social rented accommodation. The Parish is residential apart from a row of 9 shops and a petrol station at the top of Charterhouse Road. There is a café but no pub.

There are two schools in the parish: The Highway Primary School and St Olave's Grammar School (a Church of England super selective boys' school). There are many other primary and secondary schools in Orpington with decent Ofsted ratings. As well as Christ Church, there is a Methodist Church within the Parish.

Worship

Sunday worship follows a monthly pattern, which is as follows:

	9am	10:30am	6:30pm
1st Sunday	-	Holy Communion	Evening Worship
2nd Sunday	Holy Communion	Morning Worship	Evening Worship
3rd Sunday	-	Morning Worship	Holy Communion
4th Sunday	Holy Communion	Morning Worship	Evening Worship
5th Sunday	Holy Communion	Morning Worship	Evening Worship

A Common Worship Holy Communion booklet has been compiled. On the first Sunday, children and Pathfinders join the rest of the congregation after the Peace so that they can join in Communion. There



is also a service of Holy Communion on the first Wednesday of each month. Morning Worship and Evening Worship follow the principles of a Common Worship Service of the Word. Central to each service are the reading of the Holy Scriptures and the sermon, which is expected to be strongly Bible based and relevant to daily life. Lectionary readings are used in key liturgical seasons complemented by a thematic approach to preaching in ordinary time.

Music is a blend of modern worship songs with some traditional hymns and is chosen alternately by one of the two worship leaders who head up the bands. The church organ occasionally accompanies hymns. The congregation has copies of Sing Glory, but the words of the songs and hymns are projected onto a screen.

“Morning worship gives me the opportunity to actively participate in praise and worship of God in a friendly, relaxed but reverent environment. The sung worship, intercessions and Bible teaching are focused and relevant, and challenge me to grow in love and faith and follow Jesus' example in every aspect of my life.”

The small, formal 9am service takes place two or three times a month in the Chapel and always celebrates Holy Communion.

Morning services have had an average attendance of 117 Adults and 21 young people in recent months. Lay-led ministry is an important element of corporate worship with teams of welcomers, worship leaders, Bible readers, preachers, intercessors, prayer ministers, communion assistants and hospitality providers working alongside the ordained minister to share in ministry together. A small team of volunteers also run the tech desk. Children and young people's sessions run alongside the



morning service after commencing in worship together. The evening service gathers a small congregation, allowing for a more reflective approach. Recently, a Diocesan course Hearing God's Word and Speaking God's Word has been delivered to develop local preaching and teaching, with participants attending from a range of local churches.

Tech

Over a number of years, we have replaced and upgraded our tech infrastructure. New equipment includes a digital sound desk, video cameras, streaming hardware and all the associated equipment and controls. We also have new and upgraded networking infrastructure which includes improved WiFi/internet access with commercial grade security.

Tech for our services is covered by a small team of volunteers. We typically use the projector for displaying liturgy, lyrics and Bible readings but we can also project PowerPoints and videos as required. Audio recordings for sermons are accessible via our website and we also have a hearing loop.



Alpha

Over the last 25 years we have held about 30 Alpha courses for those who are spiritually seeking or for Christians who want to clarify what they believe. It has proved a great way to explore faith and has resulted in some of our house groups being formed. We have had groups in church and in people's homes, and we have also used Youth Alpha and Seniors Alpha in the past. These groups have seen a number of people find faith in Jesus and even more build up their faith in the Lord. The most exciting time for many has been the day away when we focus on the Holy Spirit and pray for him to manifest himself in our lives. Currently we hold a course about every year.

"The most moving part of the course for me was the away day on The Holy Spirit, which I believe was really the pivotal point in accepting this as the right path for me to walk along."

Mission Partners

As a CPAS patronage parish our tradition is evangelical. A long-standing member of the Evangelical Alliance, having joined in October 1992, we believe in their 'Basis of Faith' statements. We would probably describe ourselves as 'open evangelical'. Christ Church supports several mission partners in prayer and also financially through the Mission Support Fund. A number of former church members are assisted who now work in Latvia and Europe. The main organisations supported are Release International, Tearfund, Church Pastoral Aid Society, London City Mission, Bible Society, Barnabas Aid and Spinnaker Trust.

Radical Welcome



Our car park mosaic illustrates well the radical welcome we offer to visitors to our church and halls. We aim to draw people in regardless of background, age, disability or ethnicity. Our belief is that there is room for all. This is shown through the welcome we offer at our Sunday services and the coffee time afterwards, through the use of our halls and facilities, but also through our activities during the week such as our lunch club, café, warm space and community fridge.

Christ Church Community Club (CCCC)

CCCC holds a weekly lunch each Tuesday, term-time only, for about 70-80 of our older generation and for those who may feel lonely from within our local community. We are a club of friends, there for each other to celebrate happy times and to support each other during difficult times. We aim to welcome folk into a Christian atmosphere and offer them the opportunity of finding out a bit more about Jesus Christ, so we start the day with tea or coffee prior to an hour of Bible study or Holy Communion at 11am. This is led by our ministry team and is open to all with up to 25 in attendance, although this number does fluctuate.

A 3-course lunch is served at 12.45pm and is an opportunity for chat and companionship. Most of our members turn up just for lunch. A large group of volunteers work to make this possible, and we work alongside a team from the Community Payback Scheme who help to prepare and serve the food.



Transporting members to and from the club is an ongoing challenge and we have in the past relied upon Church members to act as taxis. This is currently supplemented by borrowing a minibus from the local Boys Brigade, but it is unclear how long this can continue.

"I come every week for excellent food and company. I haven't missed a week in four years. It is a 'Godsend' to come if you are living on your own. The volunteer helpers are excellent in every way."

Coffee and Cake

The Coffee and Cake morning is a time for people to enjoy a drink and a homemade cake, either with friends, family or on their own. It can be a haven of quiet, but volunteers are always available for a chat. We have an amazing group of bakers who selflessly make cakes each week, and a group of volunteers to serve refreshments every Wednesday.

Some of the challenges include encouraging more to come in for the cake and coffee, and more volunteers so that we hit our original aim of volunteering only once per month. I would love to see the group expand in bigger ways, to accommodate more customers and to have more volunteers, and perhaps to offer a cream tea afternoon once per month.

Café Mosaic

Cafe Mosaic runs every Friday from 9.15am to 2pm and serves various meals and snacks, from a cooked English breakfast to a chicken tikka masala. The volunteer staff are a cheerful bunch and seek to provide a friendly face and a kind word. Quite often it is a hub for good, caring conversations, and provides an opportunity to outreach into the wider community.



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"More than a cafe. A meeting place to have a coffee or tea and a well-cooked meal."

"Welcoming, friendly space with good food."

We ask our customers for menu ideas and make them feel as welcome as possible. The main challenge we face can be a lack of volunteers, especially in the kitchen.

"Since becoming manager, I have added little touches to make it more appealing, like flowers on the table and gentle worship music in the background."

Warm Space

We offer free simple refreshments, a warm and welcoming place to sit, and conversation to anyone who comes on a Friday morning. This provides a safe place for members of the community and reduces the need for expensive heating bills especially during this period of the cost-of-living crisis.

Open Kitchen

Open Kitchen is our community fridge, begun over four years ago at the height of the pandemic. Involving over 50 volunteers and 55 food pickups per week, we serve 40-50 local residents at each of our three sessions. We also provide clothing, toiletries and homeware. It has been wonderful getting to know our guests and supporting them through the pandemic and cost-of-living crisis, albeit wishing there were no need for our services. Our Facebook page enables larger donations to be made without needing local storage (www.facebook.com/groups/orpingtoncommunityfood).

More recently we have begun signposting to facilities and support services available locally or online, designed to alleviate the effects of poverty and assist with mental health issues, alongside those promoting life skills and job applications. More widely, we link up with other similar food charities including the Trussell Trust Bromley



Foodbank, together with Transform Bromley Borough, a network across the borough aiming to bring transformation through local churches.

Open Kitchen at Christ Church welcomes all locally who need food, without a referral or voucher system. We have forged strong links with shops in the area, with Fareshare and Neighbourly, and with the local community. It has been a delight to partner with many local residents who are an integral part of the team. Any left-over food is given to a local animal rescue centre.

Our aim as a church ministry is to engage with people where they are, to express God's love, care and compassion in practical ways, to treat one another with respect, to offer hope and encouragement, and to come alongside all in their hour of need. One team member says, "I help out at Open Kitchen to reach out to the community and spread the love of Christ." We are sometimes able to pray with our guests and several have begun to attend church. Our future aim is to start a monthly Dinner Church, inviting those who are curious or have questions to explore the Christian faith through discussions over a meal prepared and served by the guests themselves.

The Halls



The halls at Christ Church are an integral part of our local community. There are two halls, which can be combined to give a large multi-functional space that is enjoyed by many of our church family. There is also a lounge area and a full catering kitchen while in the space below the church there is a meeting room and an art room. There are currently 10 regular hall hirers, including exercise groups, theatre workshops, photography and philatelic groups, slimming and flower clubs, Baby Sensory and an after school tutoring group. Great communication is maintained between the hirers and those who facilitate the halls by our team, and most of our hirers are long standing. Paid hall hire accounts for around 50% of a typical week.

The halls are available to hire six days a week and are very popular, particularly for children's parties. The halls are hired on Saturdays for on average 48 weeks of the year.

The halls have recently been described as "warm and welcoming", "bright and airy" and "a lovely place to come", with the caretaking team described as "friendly and helpful".

Facilities & Caretaking

The facilities team provides keyholder, caretaking, maintenance and cleaning services for all who use our premises. We work closely with our Hall Bookings Administrator, Fabric Committee and Church Leadership to provide a good, safe and clean environment for all our users.

Abundant Life



The most visible artwork at Christ Church is the Tree of Life mosaic. This can be seen from the road and proclaims that Jesus brings life in all its fullness. This promise permeates through all our church activities, particularly in our Women's and Men's Ministries, trusting in God's extravagant abundance for us.

Men's Ministry

Our men's group meets once a month on a Friday night. We usually gather in the Cafe or in the Hall at Christ Church, but on occasion meet at someone's house, always with the theme of "Real Ale, Real Issues and Real Conversation" whilst enjoying some good food. God has blessed our group in so many ways by putting us together and creating an environment where blokes can be honest with themselves and each other, knowing that we are there not to judge, but to support and encourage one another. The issues we tackle have been challenging whilst simultaneously incredibly uplifting. We are clear that the purpose of our group is more than social and that we are there to support one another in our walk with Jesus, at whatever stage of our personal journey we are. Between sessions we communicate via a dedicated chat group. Our typical monthly attendance is around 20 men, although for our special events, like our summer BBQ, we can sometimes expect almost double that.

"Although I am not a regular of the Sunday congregation, this group has been a revelation to me on my own journey with Christ Jesus."

Women's Ministry

Once a month (usually a Saturday evening), the Women's Ministry group meets to discuss pressing topics, pray, socialise and have fun together. All this is usually over a meal. The core is to allow women to connect with others and journey in faith together, not just to say a passing "Hi" on Sunday. One of our toughest challenges is that we need a core of leaders to manage events. We also need a better means of reaching younger ladies. I would like to see the group continue to have a clear direction and to garner stronger connections.

"The thing I value most about the group is friendship. A time away from other activities. To just be. To dig a bit deeper into topics, to pray. To have fun."

Social Activities

The church has begun to hold socials again following the hiatus during Covid. We regularly have an event around harvest time, such as a barn dance or themed meal, and meet for occasional bring-and-share lunches. In addition, most small groups hold social events for their members. Family News, a weekly newsletter, is distributed by email to the whole congregation. It features a reflection, up-coming events, news and other items of interest.

Foundational Nurturing



We are committed to investing in children and young people through a variety of groups and activities, both on Sundays and during the week. Numbers are starting to grow slowly in the Sunday children's groups, Tea & Toys and youth provision, and there is more consistency in our Messy Church and Holiday Club. Our 'Faith, Hope and Love' mosaics, created by our younger members, are prominently displayed in Café



Mosaic. These inspire all who visit our café and are an example of children and young people ministering to adults. Our vision is to develop and nurture young lives, praying that God would work powerfully through them to build His Church.

Children's Ministry



Christ Church offers a varied and extensive program of children's activities across the week, all of which is supported by our large, wonderful team of dedicated volunteers. On term time Sunday mornings, we have a creche group in our beautifully resourced Rainbow Room, which is a soft play facility.

We also have a group for Primary aged children, which includes games, crafts, creative prayer activities, and a Bible focus, which follows the main church teaching program. Each month we run a Messy Church, which includes craft activities, hot food and music with a Bible based theme. Our Holiday Club runs for three days during the school Summer Holidays, and sessions are packed out with drama, stories, craft, music and games.

Midweek we have our Tea & Toys session for pre-school aged children and their families which has run for 50 years. These sessions include a wide variety of activities, refreshments, Bible stories and a music time. Each week we deliver assemblies at our local Primary school, with resources provided by the charity Spinnaker, and run a weekly nurture group here too.



One grandparent who attends with their granddaughter mentioned that the sessions are "bright, inviting, peaceful and well organised".

We are really blessed to have enthusiastic children who engage well in the activities and who never stop amazing us with their insight into the Bible passages we read. Throughout the year, we have a number of All-Age services, which our children and young people participate in, often writing their own prayers, or doing the Bible readings. Even the youngest of children are invited to join in through playing instruments to blowing prayer bubbles.

We engage with a large number of children and their families from our local community and build relationships with them. The biggest challenge for us is how we can engage our non-Christian families into a relationship with Jesus. Some are already involved with Messy Church and other activities such as the Café, and we are keen to continue to see these connections and relationships grow.

Youth Ministry

Our Youth Minister, who led our youth sessions, has recently left. Until this post is filled, we are thankful to have been able to recruit some new volunteers who are able to continue much of the work.

Pathfinders is our Sunday youth group for 11- to 14-year-olds. The sessions include an ice-breaker activity, a Bible focus, which follows the main church teaching program, discussion questions and creative prayer opportunities. Juice is our Saturday night group for 14- to 18-year-olds. These sessions delve deeper into the Bible passage for the week, with more in-depth questions, and an emphasis on taking responsibility for nurturing their own faith and deepening their relationship with God. There are also BASE sessions once a month on a Saturday. These sessions are for 11- to 18-year-olds and are social nights with a range of activities and pizzas.

It would be wonderful to have more frequent sessions of Juice and look at running a Youth Alpha with this group. The young people who attend our church groups are encouraged to take an active role in our All-Age services. For our older youth, these services may be a good opportunity for them to explore their gifts more, and to try out different elements of participating in the services. It would be our vision to see all our young people grow in faith and to consider the different ways in which they can minister to others in the community, maybe by supporting younger groups, helping with Messy Church, participating in the worship groups or serving refreshments.

Spiritual Refreshing



The river of life mosaic features the cross backed by concentric circles like ripples in a pond. It speaks of the power of the gospel which permeates the community, all through the enabling of the living water of the Holy Spirit. Christ Church is a community open to transformation, aiming to move in the vibrancy of the Spirit and seeking revival in ourselves and our town. We aim to provide opportunities for spiritual refreshing through our sung worship, home groups and occasional courses such as Freedom in Christ so that we can each live out our calling.

Music Ministry

Music is provided by Christ Church musicians at our 10:30am and 6:30pm worship services as well as at occasional Diocesan services. Two contemporary bands, including singers, drums, guitars, violin and flute, alternate music provision in our morning services. We also have an organ which is used on occasion for more traditional hymns, so we try to match instrumentation to the needs of the music. Group members vary in age, and we rehearse weekly. During evening services, music is provided by the service leaders on piano or guitar, reflecting the more meditative style of worship. Our sung worship is varied across different traditions from contemporary praise songs, Taizé and hymns. Music is chosen to speak into the current biblical passage or to provide response to it in our thinking and lifestyle. Music group members have provided contemporary music at Rochester Cathedral on several occasions including Chrism services and licensing services for Lay Ministers.



Other musical input during the church year involves Orpington Gospel Choir and an annual Christmas choir. Both groups take part in our Carols by Candlelight service and provide a rich and varied mix of sung worship alongside traditional carols on the organ. We are blessed with a number of songwriters, and a newly composed song is always included at our carol service. A scratch choir is often gathered at other times in the church year, particularly at Easter.

In the recent past, Christ Church had both a children's music group and a teenage band. Members of the band moved away to study or were integrated into the adult music groups. Covid provided a hiatus during which the groups disbanded. We would love to create an opportunity for a young people's group to flourish once more. Our current music groups are looking to grow in their response to the Spirit's leading during worship so that we allow God more freedom to speak and move in our midst.

Freedom in Christ

A ten-session discipleship course, Freedom in Christ, has been held twice in recent years. Through exploring our true identity in Christ, we discovered we are free to be the people God created us to be.

House Groups

Traditionally much of the work of nurturing and caring for one another has been done through small groups which have met weekly or fortnightly. At one time around 70% of the Church members were in small groups, which mainly studied scripture and supported one another in Christian living. In the last decade, and especially since COVID, the number attending regular house groups has fallen. We have three evening groups, one of which is held online. Both daytime groups meet twice a month. All the groups arrange occasional social activity. The house groups are supplemented by all the other small groups meeting at Christ Church.

“I value the opportunity to study the scriptures and have honest conversations about how they should impact my life today within a supportive small group.”

“House group for me is friendship, prayer support and discovering what the Bible says about situations we may encounter in our everyday lives, and how to cope with them.”

Creative Healing



We are a caring community, aiming to support and protect those in need in compassionate and creative ways. Rooted in prayer and pastoral care, in addition to safeguarding, we honour each individual irrespective of their apparent value to society. Our flower arranging team use their artistic skills for Sunday services, weddings and funerals. Occasional creative workshops promote inner emotional and spiritual healing, and these resin bookmarks graphically show that journey from darkness to light.

Pastoral Care

Our group has been active for over 20 years, made up of a dedicated committee of seven men and women. Our mission is to provide compassionate, confidential pastoral care for all congregation members, staff, and visitors. With needs being so varied, friends and other church members are often some of the most effective sources of support. When practical assistance is needed, such as a ride to the hospital or church, the committee is here to help.

Prayer Ministry

Prayer is an integral part of church life at Christ Church. A weekly prayer meeting is held every Wednesday in term time which is attended by a small group of faithful pray-ers. We cover all aspects of church life in prayer - its services, leaders, ministries and our wider impact on the community - as well as mission and events further afield. Far from simply using a list of people to uphold in prayer, we are guided by the Holy Spirit to a biblical passage which enables us to focus our intercessions on a particular aspect of the Christian life or witness. Prophetic words, pictures and dreams are also shared, allowing us to receive fresh encouragement and inspiration from God. Prayer is of course an essential

ingredient of Sunday worship, and members of our prayer ministry team are available after each service to support members of the congregation.

On the first Saturday of each month, we hold a Revival Prayer Meeting where Christians with a real heart for revival gather from a few churches across Orpington. This was begun in 2019 following a vision received by a member of Christ Church, but it amalgamated more recently with a pre-existing Churches Together in Orpington prayer group. Again, this is led by the Holy Spirit who directs our prayers for an awakening in the churches and amongst our communities. We pray particularly into areas of church ministry geared towards evangelism and ministries such as Street Pastors which are supported ecumenically.



We aim to make the most of social media in our prayer life too. Each Saturday we encourage individuals to pray for an hour at some point during the day and record on the group chat any verses, words, pictures, dreams or songs we receive. An email prayer chain is also in place which reaches more than 50 individuals who have committed to pray for pastoral situations.

Our long-term aim is to make prayer more of an integrated part of our response to the Sunday teaching, forming part of our worship services. We would also like to use gifts of the Spirit, as appropriate, in these one-to-one prayer encounters so that God can minister to each individual in a deeply personal way.

"I have witnessed God move in healing; His promises were made manifest through prayer."

Emerge (Creative Workshops)

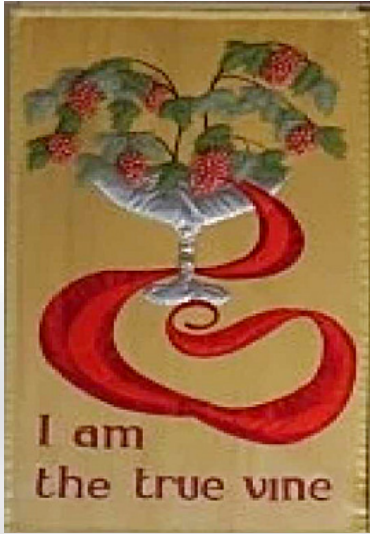
Held occasionally over the last few years, these Emerge workshops aim to promote spiritual healing through creativity. Each workshop has a general theme which is expressed through a variety of art forms and linked to biblical input.



Safeguarding & GDPR

Our Safeguarding Officer regularly gives updates on our compliance with Safeguarding Training against the Parish Handbook and our compliance on DBS in line with Safer Recruitment Guidelines. The church has a GDPR representative who ensures that we follow best practice on using personal data and adhere to the Data Protection Act (2018).

Community Connections



Our true vine banner reminds us that we are to abide in Christ and that we are branches of the vine, connected to one another both within our parish and further afield. We have forged links in Orpington, Bromley Borough and more widely through Churches Together in Orpington, Rochester Diocese and other Christian organizations. Many of our church members are embedded in these groups which give us a wider perspective of how God is working in our area. Christ Church has a special link with Unity Church, a Christian community working and thriving in one of the most deprived areas of the town.

Deanery Synod & Diocesan Synod

A member of our congregation has been the Lay Chair of Deanery Synod since 2019; unfortunately, she is our only representative on this Synod. She has also been a member of Diocesan Synod since 2021, our first representative in many decades.

Churches Together in Orpington (CTO)

Christ Church is part of CTO, a network of local churches in the town. We join together on several occasions during the year for services, social events, prayer meetings and vision meetings.

Unity Church

Unity Church Ramsden is a Bishops Mission Order within the parish boundary of All Saints Orpington on the Ramsden Estate. It was formed over 10 years ago when the Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) between Anglican and Methodist Churches was becoming somewhat moribund. The numbers and finances of the LEP were critical and the then Area Dean and Vicar of Christ Church Orpington worked to bring about a regeneration. A new partnership was formed between Christ Church and Hope Church Orpington, part of New Frontiers International.



The congregation has grown to around 50 adults and around four under 16s each Sunday. It has become increasingly ethnically diverse and thus represents the local community. It is financially self-funding. It has a charismatic, evangelical spirituality and a heart to serve the local community through social action projects. The governance structure and charitable status of the church is secure, and the Vicar of Christ Church does not carry onerous pastoral or administrative authority for the church but is responsible for attending the “Steering Group Meeting” which meets approximately once a term and offering counsel and support to the Lead Minister.

Christians Against Poverty

Christ Church supports Christians Against Poverty (CAP) Bromley via Churches Together in Orpington. There are individual members who volunteer as debt coaches, and befrienders who assist with life skills, job clubs and money courses. Our building has spaces available for one-to-one meetings for debt sessions on request.

Street Pastors

We support the work of the local street pastor team with four members of the congregation being active Street Pastors. The Street Pastors operate under the umbrella of the Ascension Trust and are managed locally by a charitable Trust. We are committed to this ecumenical work and report regularly to Churches Together in Orpington meetings.

Bromley Borough Foodbank

Members of the church volunteer at the Trussell Trust Foodbank at Bromley but we also collect food donations each week. Our Harvest service display is divided between the foodbank and Open Kitchen.

Operation Christmas Child

Each November we take part in Operation Christmas Child, a project run by Samaritan’s Purse. Up to 100 shoeboxes are filled with clothes, toys and sweets by congregation members and sent to children in need.

Resources

There are various resources available to assist the vicar in their role. For each ministry there is existing leadership in place, including an Evangelist and two Licensed Lay Ministers as well as volunteers. This will free the vicar up to consider where best to invest their personal contribution and energy. Lay-led ministry is an integral part of our church life which enables us to be the body of Christ and exercise the gifts that God has given each of us. There are also people resources such as the PCC and those on staff, financial resources and the physical resource of the vicarage.



The PCC

The day to day running of the church, its governance and key decision-making, takes place at our PCC. The PCC achieves this through six annual meetings, correspondence and through receiving updates from several sub-committees. These include HR, finance, fabric and our links to other Christian groups locally and further afield. Regular updates about issues such as safeguarding feature in our meetings, as do periodical discussions about our various ministries. Although this sounds traditional, we are not good at bureaucracy.

We have knowledgeable people from a variety of backgrounds, who bring their skills and wisdom to the PCC table. The group functions well and there is a high level of respect for each other. Importance is placed on hearing from God and serving the people of our congregation. We value unity as a group. The PCC also comprises a subgroup of two wardens and two deputy wardens. This foursome is available to the vicar as a flexible resource to help in any way needed.

Looking forwards, a new vicar will be welcome to chair the PCC, but the option not to is possible too. The PCC is well-established, but equally it is receptive to direction from a new leader.

“Having served on the PCC for a number of years, I am pleased to say that we are a supportive and encouraging group. This does not mean that we avoid difficult conversations, but we all approach this with love, unity and prayer for godly wisdom.”



Staff Team

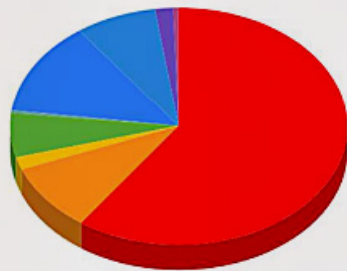
There are currently eight employed members of staff, all line-managed by the vicar apart from the cleaners: a Parish Administrator (temporarily split into a small team), two Children's Ministers, a Cafe Manager, two Facilities Managers, a Hall Bookings Administrator and a cleaner; there is an additional contract cleaner. Money is also ring-fenced for a Youth Minister position which recently became vacant; this post is also line-managed by the vicar.

Finances

Income	2023	2022
Planned Giving	177,400	163,008
Gift Aid	27,421	32,639
Legacies	5,000	45,075
Donated Goods & Services	17,824	13,009
Grants Receivable	1,130	4,362
Rental Income	38,195	31,835
Church Events & Activities	23,041	25,381
Investments	5,159	1,286
Other Income	1,559	73
Total Income	£296,729	£316,668

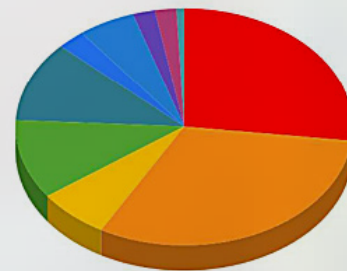
Expenditure	2023	2022
Parish Share	81,322	78,033
Staff Costs	94,510	91,640
Church Running Costs	20,678	7,674
Hall Running Costs	32,690	29,530
Mission Giving	33,457	48,406
Depreciation	8,050	7,418
Church Activities & Events	16,591	14,438
Vicarage & Minister Expenses	6,391	6,185
Ministry Costs	6,209	5,625
Support Costs	2,266	6,199
Total Expenditure	£302,164	£295,148
Balance Sheet Nett Assets	£201,738	£207,173

Christ Church Orpington Income 2023



- Planned Giving (59.8%)
- Gift Aid (9.2%)
- Legacies (1.7%)
- Donated Goods & Services (6%)
- Grants Receivable (0.004%)
- Rental Income (12.9%)
- Church Activities & Events (7.8%)
- Investments (1.7%)
- Other Income (0.005%)

Christ Church Orpington Expenditure 2023



- Parish Shares (26.9%)
- Staff Costs (31.3%)
- Church Running Costs (6.8%)
- Hall Running Costs (10.8%)
- Mission Giving (11.1%)
- Depreciation (2.7%)
- Church Activities & Events (5.5%)
- Vicarage & Minister Expenses (2.1%)
- Ministry Costs (2.1%)
- Support Costs (0.7%)

Vicarage

The Vicarage is a 1950s brick-built home, with a separate garage. It is double-glazed, has gas-fired central heating and a burglar alarm. It has a double-aspect lounge, dining room, study and WC downstairs, and four bedrooms, two with wash-hand basins, and bathroom/WC upstairs. The Vicarage has a good-sized garden to front and rear, and stands adjacent to the church.



Opportunities and Challenges

We are committed to our mission statement, 'Devoted to Christ, Dedicated to Community', and we're excited to discover and understand how to further implement this both at Christ Church and in our community. Within the church, we aim to continue developing our work with children and young people, particularly supporting those with additional needs. We are looking to expand our commitment to radical welcome in our services and ministries into committed discipleship pathways. In the community, we are aspiring to forge stronger links with local schools and grow our relationships with local residents of all social strata.

We face various challenges as a church, centring on encouraging more volunteers to come forward for Community Club, Coffee and Cake, and Café Mosaic. Core leaders are needed for Women's Ministry, alongside creative engagement with younger women.

There are more substantial challenges in certain key areas. We have begun to explore gifts of the Spirit and would like to incorporate these more, together with prayer, in our services. In pastoral care for example, there are no younger members on the team which could be problematic in the next few years. We would love to see the numbers in our Children's and Youth Ministries grow and sessions for young people to be extended. Filling the role of Youth Minister should enable Youth Alpha to be offered while encouraging young people to take a more active role in services, especially forming a music group for this age group.

More widely we would like to build on our fringe or social activities to engage more in outreach, such as engaging with the families who come to Messy Church and Tea & Toys. The mixed model of paid staff and volunteers can be a challenge when aiming to start a new venture or grow an existing activity. There is a need to encourage a culture of leadership throughout the church. There is a need to engage with all socio-economic groups within the parish; this has come to the fore with the creation of our community fridge and could be extended by setting up Dinner Church. Finally, we are facing into the challenge of encouraging CTO to hold regular prayer meetings.

Our Vicar

We are looking for an inspirational leader who is rooted both in the Bible and in prayer, and is open and sensitive to the work of the Holy Spirit. Further, he or she will have a pastoral heart to share the gospel in relevant and appealing ways to a changing society, nurture relationships, and encourage us to do the same.

Our vicar needs to be an enabler, encourager and a good communicator, experienced in managing paid staff and volunteers, but also a team player, able to lead and develop a cohesive team whilst promoting these qualities in the congregation. He or she should have experience in growing children's and youth ministry, and in shaping and developing a vision in which we can share. We are searching for a person who has demonstrated a clear focus in making discipleship pathways more intentional, can motivate us to engage in this ourselves, and who is passionate about community-focused projects.

We are seeking a leader who will inspire us to move closer to God and hear from Him about the things that He has planned for Christ Church. Our expectation is to see God moving in the church and community and, as a congregation, we are passionate about joining in where He is working. We are willing to listen, to respond, and we are ambitious to see the church grow.

Thank you for showing an interest in Christ Church Orpington by reading this parish profile. If you sense that God is prompting you to apply for the role of incumbent here, please contact either Allie Kerr or Mike Duff:

The Ven Allie Kerr

Archdeacon of Bromley and Bexley
via her Executive Assistant, Fiona Porter
Tel: 07768 237328
Email: fiona.porter@rochester.anglican.org

Rev Canon Mike Duff

Patronage Secretary, CPAS
via his Executive Assistant, Dagmer Dias
Tel: 024 7510 3576
Email: ddias@cpas.org.uk



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Diocese of *Rochester*
called together

