

## **Vacancy in the parish of St John the Divine, Selsdon**

Statement in relation to the benefice, the needs of the diocese and the wider interests of the Church.

### **The Benefice**

St John's is a stable parish with great potential for further growth and development. The church is well connected to the networks of the local community, in an area with a strong sense of local identity. Over recent years the parish has made considerable effort to connect more with families in the parish, and there has been some change in the worshipping congregation as a result. The opening of the new Garden Room should enable any families with young children in particular to engage more easily with parish worship, and its impact may be greater than its relatively small size might suggest.

Selsdon is a prosperous area, gradually becoming more ethnically diverse. Engaging the parish with the church's mission to the wider community of the diocese and beyond will be important in growing the spirituality and faith of the congregation.

Within the parish, the Conventional District of St Francis Monks Hill has a distinct identity and has in recent years been renewed in the evangelical tradition. It is envisaged that in the next few years it will be appropriate for St Francis to become a parish in its own right. In the meantime, the legal responsibilities of the incumbent will need to be exercised with sensitivity and in full collaboration with the minister in charge of St Francis.

### **The Deanery**

The parish is part of the Croydon Addington Deanery. The Area Dean writes:

Croydon Addington Deanery comprises significant socio-economic diversity, ranging from leafy suburbs to areas high on the index of multiple deprivation. In addition, parts of the deanery relate more easily to the neighbouring borough of Bromley whereas others are firmly Croydon based. All parts of the deanery enjoy excellent transport links and Central London is easily accessible as is the beautiful Surrey and Kent countryside. Despite our diversity there is a genuine desire and move towards increasing collegiality and a growing awareness of the ways in which we can share our gifts for the benefit of all. The clergy meet regularly for worship and the sharing of joys and sorrows and deanery synod, as well as conducting its business, has an ongoing programme of inspiring and informative speakers. The voices of the laity are greatly valued as we work together for the furtherance of God's kingdom in this part of S E London.

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## **The needs of the Diocese & the wider church**

The Diocesan Vision sets out our shared vision for a future in which we will see:

- growing churches, new worshipping communities and new Christians
- deepening discipleship: engaged, prayerful and informed Christians
- growth in vocations to existing and new ministries
- generous giving and prayer supporting all we do
- justice and peace built up, and violence challenged, in our local and global community
- a shared commitment to the integrity of creation
- a church for all which reflects our diverse community in membership and leadership.

Across a varied diocese, that vision will be worked out in different ways in different places. In every setting, though, we are expecting each parish to reflect in some way all of the Five Marks of Mission; to be encouraging and developing the ministry of the whole people of God; and to be working collaboratively with fellow Anglicans, other Christians and their local communities in the service of the gospel.

## **Finance**

As of 2016, a new system of financial contributions was introduced across the Diocese, called the Parish Support Fund (PSF). All parishes and churches are invited to contribute with generosity, and to aim at least to meet their own ministerial costs. St John's Selsdon made a pledge for 2020 of £81,200, which continued their pattern of yearly increases each year since the introduction of the PSF and matched the indicative costs for the year of £81,200. The offer for 2021, however, is only £24,000. While 2020 has been a very challenging year for parish and diocesan finances and we are unsure of what 2021 will bring, we would firmly expect St John's to be able to cover their ministry costs and not be supported by others in the diocese. Selsdon is not in an area of multiple deprivation, indeed quite the opposite, and it should be able to give generously over and above its own costs and enable the diocese to resource ministry in areas of severe deprivation. We would expect the new incumbent to work with the lay leaders to return to the previous pattern of generous giving. At the present level of contributions, it is unlikely that St John's would receive another full-time incumbent.

## **Collaborative Ministry**

I am looking to appoint clergy in this Area who are able to articulate their vision for the mission of the church in the places to which they are called, and who have a vision for the church's growth. In whatever tradition or location, I look to hear from the clergy how they will work together with lay members of the church and with their neighbouring parishes and colleagues. I am looking for people with active and developing spiritual lives, able to be an example of discipleship to the people of God. I take very seriously my own responsibilities as pastor to the clergy and will always endeavour to make myself available to support them in their ministry.

+Jonathan Croydon