

St. Mary Magdalene

Longfield

Parish Profile





*At St. Mary Magdalene Church we aim to grow in
the Lord and live our lives in accordance with
Christian belief and through sharing our faith,
bringing church and community together and
following the Diocesan vision
'Called Together'*



Ministry Profile

What type of Priest are we looking for?

We are looking to appoint a pastoral and prayerful, faith-led priest.

Someone who:

- Will maintain and nurture our existing church family while helping us to reach out to the community of our parish and encourage our discipleship through teaching and prayer.
- Is an effective and collaborative team leader in our parish and the Rural North West Kent Group (RNWK) and wider Deanery.
- Will continue to progress and support the spiritual gifts of the laity which we have been developing in recent years.
- Will actively nurture the Christian distinctiveness of our local Church of England Primary School, Langafel, through collective worship, SIAMS and pastoral care within the school.
- Help us find new ways to share our faith beyond the walls of the church, taking the church to the people.

If you feel that God is calling you to this post, we can offer you:

- A caring, supportive, proactive and inclusive congregation and ministry team who embrace change and the '[Called Together](#)' ethos and vision.
- The support of the RNWK Group of churches and clergy and lay ministers.
- The prayerful and practical support of the collective Church Wardens and PCC's of Longfield, Fawkham and Hartley parishes as this is a shared post with Fawkham and Hartley.
- Joint Parish administrator, based at an office in the Hartley Church Centre.
- Membership of the Clergy Chapter.

Churchmanship of St. Mary Magdalene Church, Longfield

We would classify St. Mary Magdalene Church as a modern thinking and inclusive church where our worship is broad and balanced with a liberal ethos.

We have growing audio-visual capabilities within the church and Jubilee Hall, which is sympathetically blended, into our beautiful building. This gives us the freedom to enhance our traditional services using the advantages of modern technology as required. This capability expands our accessibility to those we serve, not only with induction loops, audio and visual projection, but also through inclusion for those who can't get to us.

Just this year we had a Baptism in church where a Godmother who had been excited about the Baptism for weeks went down with Covid the day before, which was devastating for her and the family. Not wanting to let Covid exclude her, we linked the Godmother live to the service via Zoom allowing her to actively participate in the entire service taking her vows alongside the other God Parents

and family as if she were physically there. This made a difference to both the Godmother and family that could not be quantified.

We aspire to upgrade the oldest elements of the system in the near future in order to provide more accessibility options to our parish and wider community including making provision for wireless internet capability.

Parochial Church Council (PCC)

We have a full complement of PCC members, including two Church Wardens, a Parish Safeguarding Officer and Deanery Synod representatives. The PCC meets five times per year plus the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM).

As our Priest, you will be able to call on our ministry team at St. Mary Magdalene Church Longfield having three Licenced Lay Ministers, one of which is also an Anna Chaplain and one Evangelist currently being re-commissioned.

The RNWK Group as a whole has five Licenced Lay Ministers, one Reader, one ordinand and one Group Curate. One Group Associate Priest who is SSM and one Stipendiary Priest for the parishes of Ash and Ridley.

Deanery and Diocesan Synods and Bishop's Council

St. Mary Magdalene Church has representation at both the Deanery and Diocesan Synods, the Lay Chair of the Deanery Synod is from St. Mary Magdalene. Longfield also has one member of the congregation attending both the Diocesan Synod and the Bishop's Council.

Pastoral Care Group

"The whole body depends on Christ, and all parts of the body are joined and held together. Each part does its own work to make the whole body grow and be strong with love." Ephesians Chapter 4 verse 16

Mindful that pastoral care is more effective when it is shared amongst the whole congregation rather than centralised with a small team, and that caring for one another across the parish and the RNWK Group does not, and cannot depend just on the clergy, a Pastoral Care Group has been set up to help us all better care for one another. The Pastoral Team makes regular visits to the three Care homes within the parish, Russell Court, Hazelwood and Bramblings.

The Pastoral Team links in with the Anna Chaplain representatives and others across the RNWK Group and Cobham Deanery.

Administration and The Parish Office

The practical arrangements for booking Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals and Interment of Ashes; are handled by the Parish Office.

The Longfield PCC part funds the Parish Office administrator (with the PCC of Fawkhams and Hartley) to support the admin of St. Mary Magdalene. We are exploring the option to increase this funding to cover more hours for the

administrator(s) to support the Priest in Charge, Church Wardens and PCC with more of our administration task such as treasurer support and other paperwork tasks.

Members of the congregation support the Church Wardens by putting in place various rotas to enable the smooth running of services, including the duties for Sidesmen, Bible readers, Intercessors and Sound system etc. and they arrange midweek church open mornings during the Spring and Summer months.

We are always grateful that arrangements for floral decoration, church cleaning and refreshments rotas are organised by experienced volunteers within our congregation.

Services

St. Mary Magdalene has been instrumental in the setting up and the evolution of the Rural North West Kent (RNWK) Group. Our services are planned and agreed with the Group Ministry team and Church Wardens within that structure on a four-monthly cycle.

Apart from special, festival and seasonal services the regular monthly service pattern at St. Mary Magdalene routinely offers one 8am service and four services at 10.30am in the following pattern:

1st Sunday	10.30 Parish Eucharist
2nd Sunday	08.00 Holy Communion (BCP) 10.30 Morning Worship
3rd Sunday	10.30 Parish Eucharist
4th Sunday	10.30 Morning Worship
5th Sunday	Services vary

There is also a midweek Holy Communion service every other Wednesday at one of the RNWK Group Churches on rotation.

Children's Ministry

Sunday Funday Club is St. Mary Magdalene Church young peoples church group aimed at children from two to ten years old. SFC would normally meet in the Jubilee Hall during the main morning service and would follow the same theme as the main service usually resulting in a variety of craft activities after looking at the bible reading. SFC would then join the main service before the final hymn to show what the children had been doing. SFC was temporarily suspended during the pandemic following Diocesan guidelines. SFC then adapted to provide children's activities under the bell tower during the main service under the guidelines post lockdown is still currently operating in this way. SFC could revert to its normal pattern when youth leaders become available.

Music

We have a dedicated church choir at St. Mary Magdalene led by our church organist. This is open to anyone within the congregation or the local community who want to be a part of a small but committed local choir. For special services, we can also call upon the singers from the RNWK Group to boost our numbers.

We are fortunate to have a very experienced and talented organist who has a music degree, BMus (Hons), from London University / from Trinity College of Music who leads the choir and guides our musical worship.

Outreach in the Community

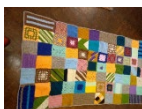
How then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? Romans Chapter 10 verse 14.

St. Mary Magdalene participates in Outreach within the community when and wherever we can. St. Mary Magdalene Church sits on the Main Road and provides a focal point for the community / a visual sign of church. The close proximity of the building to the station, library and shops, mean opportunities exist for outreach which members of our congregation are keen to embrace and build on. Below are some examples of what our church and parish do.

'Little Longfield' Stay and Play meet every Tuesday morning from 9.30-11am in the Jubilee Hall during term time. The group is children of a pre-school age covering naught to four years along with their parents and carers.

LANBARA Longfield and New Barn Active Retirement Association.

Yarn & Yap informal social group making blankets for Whitechapel Mission.



Lunch Club meets every Tuesday afternoon between 12pm and 3.30pm, except for the third Tuesday in the month. It caters for the elderly within Longfield, Hartley, New Barn areas. It is also attended by those who live in the home in Station Road who have learning difficulties. Lunch is usually two/three courses with tea/coffee and there is always an activity or some form of entertainment. Our Anna Chaplain regularly attends.

Bible Study Group open to all in RNWK Group. This is a Zoom group meeting on a Monday night from 7.30-9pm. The group studies a wide range of Bible topics usually taking six to ten sessions on any given topic led by different people from clergy, LLM and Laity on occasion on any given week. Congregation members attend our Bible Study Group from all churches within the RNWK group. The group breaks to focus on Lent and Advent specific study topics when appropriate.

Special services:

Remembrance Service with the local Scouts, Brownies and Cubs. In 2018 we held a special **'Called To Remember Service'** with a walk of witness around Longfield village and service of war poetry and worship for over 200 people from the local community.

All Souls' Service is a service where all are welcome, but those who have lost loved ones in the past two years are particularly invited to attend, with refreshments afterwards.

Sea Sunday service with the local Scout and Cub groups.

Green Matters 'Called To Grow Service' service developed by the Lay Ministers of Longfield to start to reconnect our RNWK group congregations with the local environment and Creation Care. We are on track for our Diocesan Bronze Eco Award.

Regular Services at Festivals:

Harvest Service of thanksgiving with a food collection for local food bank and monetary proceeds to the Poverty and Hope Appeal.

Christmas – Regular seasonal services plus Christingle Service for the Children's Society.

Mothering Sunday parish service.

Easter services within the RNWK Group including a Walk of Witness/Pilgrimage.

The Community Cupboard is our local Food Bank which is supported by the entire RNWK Group of Churches and provides a vital service to our communities. We have food donation collection points at each church. St. Mary Magdalene's 2022 Harvest collection also went to the Community Cupboard.

Our Church School Langafel CE Primary School, Longfield.



Langafel is St. Mary Magdalene's Church of England Primary School and is one of two church CE schools within the Longfield, Fawkham and Hartley parishes. The other is Fawkham CE Primary School. Langafel has both mainstream and a unit provision, which work together seamlessly and is a leading light in SEN and inclusion field within the Kent Local Authority. Langafel has the Christian ethos firmly embedded at its heart and is a place where the children always come first.

We believe in the potential of every child regardless of background or individual needs as expressed in Luke 15, The Parable of the Lost Sheep. We are committed to providing an emotionally supportive environment, where pupils flourish, growing both spiritually and academically; securing foundations for each child to understand who they are and the unique qualities they bring to the world.

Our vision at Langafel

All church schools have to select and embed four core Christian values at their centre and Langafel chose Perseverance, Honesty, Respect and Koinonia.

As Priest in Charge of St. Mary Magdalene, you would automatically hold the Incumbents' Foundation Governor post at Langafel. The governing body meets 6 times a year, which equates to once per term. However, where we need your focus is not with traditional governor activities but with the Christian life of the school, particularly with:

- Taking Collective Worship for the pupils in school on a regular basis, ideally once a week or once a fortnight during term time.
- Supporting the school in their Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) activities, Christian development and any diocesan school inspections of the school.
- Supporting the school, pupils and staff in maintaining the Christian Distinctiveness of the school faith activities, pastoral support where needed and occasional visit to RE lessons.

Members of our congregation are also Governors of the school, one serving as a Foundation Governor and one serving as the Chair of Governors. We host annual services at St. Mary Magdalene Church for Langafel including a service for the summer year six school leavers, as well as Christmas and Easter services.

Langafel is assessed by Ofsted and Rochester Diocese as a "Good School" and has some 323 pupils. Langafel leases a portion of its site to Molly's Preschool, which provides early years learning for two–four-year-olds. We would like, through our new Priest and existing Lay Ministry team to enhance our profile to the families of pupils at Langafel through our presence within the school and hopefully attract school families into our church family.

Useful School Information Web Links

www.langafel.kent.sch.uk
www.langafel.kent.sch.uk/vision-and-values
www.langafel.kent.sch.uk/christian-faith
www.langafel.kent.sch.uk/siams
www.mollyspreschool.co.uk
www.fawkham.kent.sch.uk/

Other Schools within the Longfield Parish

Rowhill School which is assessed by Ofsted as a "Good School" caters for students between the ages of five and sixteen and is a day special school designated for pupils with special learning, social emotional, behavioural needs and mental health difficulties. Two thirds of the students are secondary school age.

We also have a good relationship with the Rowhill School. We conduct a Carol Service for the school as well as being asked to participate and engage at their school assemblies where able.

Longfield Academy is part of the Leigh Academies Trust and is the local secondary school based on the Main Road in Longfield. Longfield Academy which is assessed by Ofsted as a "Good School" has around 1,000 pupils aged between eleven-eighteen years. About 150 of these are engaged on age sixteen-nineteen study programmes.

Communications & Publicity

St. Mary Magdalene Church has its own website at www.longfieldchurch.org. The church website and RNWK Facebook page is updated with details of significant events and services.

The Parish Office sends a joint Fawkham, Hartley and Longfield news bulletin called 'Noticeboard' every fortnight. The publication contains information on services, study groups, intercessions, events, activities, help requests, the Collect, key contacts, relevant adverts and notices across all three churches to a cross-parish e-mail distribution list. Printed copies are also available within each church.

About the Parish

The village of Longfield is situated in a semi-rural location on the B260 between Dartford and Meopham and is approximately five miles from both Dartford and Gravesend.

The ecclesiastical parish is small although long and narrow, bordering Green Street Green to the West and encompassing the hamlet of Longfield Hill to the East. Apart from the village itself it includes the Bramblefields Estate (to the south of the

railway) and a section of Hartley Bottom Road. It also incorporates a small part of New Barn which is a purely residential area, the remainder of which falls into the parish of Southfleet although many of its residents gravitate to Longfield and therefore to our church.



Following some recent housing development, it is estimated that there are approximately 3,400 people living in the ecclesiastical parish although there are many worshippers who are drawn from the larger civil parish which contains around 4,800 residents overall. This is illustrated in our Church Electoral Roll which shows that of the 72 members just over half of them live outside the parish.

The majority of Longfield residents live in owner-occupied properties although there is also some social housing and there are three Care Homes.

We are fortunate that the rate of unemployment in Longfield is lower than both the Kent and national average. The population of Longfield is older than the Kent average and this is reflected in the age profile of our congregation.

Local Facilities

The railway station and shops serve the local communities of New Barn, Southfleet, Fawkham, Hartley and New Ash Green.

In the centre of the village the amenities include a library, a doctors' surgery, dental practice and two chemists. There is also a small range of independent shops and businesses, two supermarkets, a petrol station and a garage. There is also a public house and a variety of eateries/cafes and takeaways. We usually find that the local shopkeepers are very supportive of the church. The local post office is in the newsagents opposite the station and there are two other nearby post offices in Hartley and New Ash Green. There is one bank in the village and an outlet for all of the traditional high-street bank brands in the Bluewater Shopping Centre a short drive or bus journey away.

The village has a safe play area, football pitches and common green space where outside functions can be held, including the annual Longfield Festival. The Long Valley Community Hall provides opportunities for evening activities and meetings. Other local amenities include The Long Valley Social Club, two areas of allotments, an active Junior football club – The Longfield Tigers and local Brownies, Guides Cubs and Scouts groups.

With its station with fast links to London, as well as many and varied shops, Longfield represents a “hub” for the RNWK Group, which will become increasingly important as the connections in the group continue to strengthen.

The hamlet of Longfield Hill no longer has any shops but there is still a Public House with a restaurant.



Transport

Longfield is within easy reach of several major routes, the A2/M2, M20 and M25 which gives direct routes to London, the Dartford Crossing, Medway towns and beyond. The local bus services serve nearby villages and run to the local towns of Dartford, Gravesend and the Bluewater Shopping Centre.

Our railway station has a regular service to London via Bromley and the Kent coast via the Medway towns and Ebbsfleet International is only 15 minutes away with its High-Speed links to London, Brussels and Paris.

In normal traffic conditions we are also within a one hour driving radius of all four main London Airports.

Church history

The church, which is sited centrally within the parish, is recorded as being built in 1343 A.D. and was extended westward in the 1890s. The earliest Rector in the Parish of Longfield is recorded as 1075 A.D. The church has a seating capacity of approximately 150.



Construction of the church is flint and stone under a tiled roof. The tiles of the north slope of the roof were replaced in 2005 with support from the whole parish and village. Items of particular historical interest include a beautifully painted and restored medieval window fragment and the grave of Dr. Plume, Archdeacon of Rochester (1679 to 1704). More detail can be found using the weblink below.

www.longfieldchurch.org/history

Electoral roll

The Electoral Roll membership as at October 2022 was 72; with 33 resident and 39 non-resident members.

Attendance

Average attendance figures for an average year are as follows: -

Sunday Services	
Early morning 8:00 am – 8 to 10	10:30am service – 40 to 45
Christmas Services	
Christingles 4pm & 7pm – 290	Midnight Communion - 55
Other services	
Easter day – 69	Harvest - 30
Wednesday Group Communion 10	

Fabric

We have a quinquennial inspection every five years, the next one is due imminently. There is a Repair Fund to assist in covering the cost of any work required and grants are sought as needed.

Fabric matters are dealt with by a small Fabric Committee; consisting of three or four members of the congregation. Informal working parties are regularly arranged for both internal and external upkeep of church, hall and grounds.

Jubilee Hall

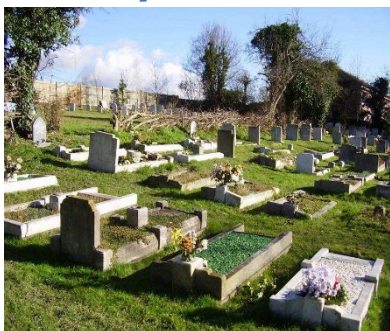
A vestry extension, known as the Jubilee Hall, is attached to the Church at the west end and shares an entrance porch with the west door of the Church. This has kitchen and toilet facilities, a large TV screen and a seating capacity for sixty people. It is used, not only as a vestry, but also for 'Sunday Funday Club' and Church social and fundraising events.



The Jubilee Hall is also available for private hire and is a source of income for our Church. Examples of how it is hired is for children's parties, family events, local groups and organisations. The hall bookings are managed by volunteer members of our congregation, as is the cleaning of both the Jubilee Hall and our church.



Churchyards



The Church has three churchyards. The original surrounds the church building. The second, "New Churchyard" is sited opposite the church on the north side of Main Road. It was extended and consecrated in 1997 to form a third, known as "Church Downs", comprising a downland meadow created by sowing wild flowers and grasses.

Families of deceased people are encouraged to continue our policy of care for this meadow. A member of the congregation cuts the grass of the churchyards regularly and the Parish Council and Dartford Borough Council have provided grants towards the maintenance of these. A new Garden of Remembrance was created recently, to the north of the Chancel.

Rectory

The Rectory, at 67 Main Road, is a detached building sited centrally within the parish and almost opposite the church.

The Rectory is currently occupied by the RNWK Group Curate. The rectory our new Priest in Charge would be occupying is located in Hartley.



Finance

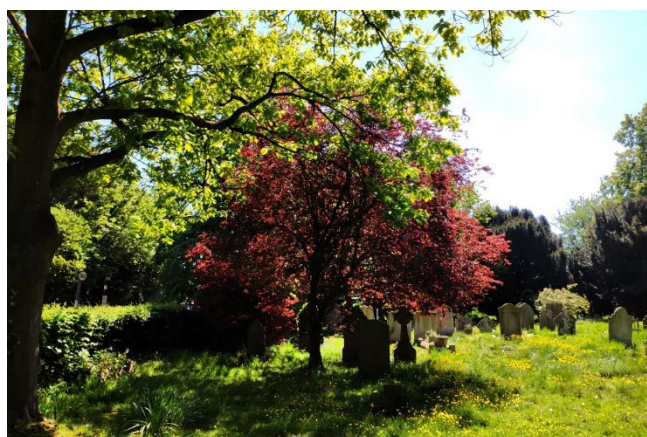
The post of treasurer at St. Mary Magdalene Church is currently vacant. At the time of writing, we are exploring a few options to fill this post as soon as possible.

General fund income and expenditure for 2021 was in the range £60-70,000 and the PCC normally expects to break even each year. The PCC has a policy for its level of reserves, aiming to hold sufficient unrestricted funds to cover three month's expenditure. The stipend is set centrally and approved by Diocesan Synod. Full expenses of office are paid by the PCC. There is a free will offering scheme using a combination of envelopes and standing orders, which is used by approximately 75 members of the congregation. The PCC regularly give 10% of normal income for various missionary and charitable works and have bi-monthly collections for different charities.

Safeguarding

St. Mary Magdalene is compliant with the Diocesan guidelines on safeguarding. We have three Safeguarding Representatives on the PCC, one Safeguarding Officer and Lead Recruiter who manages the process of accreditation for the majority of church people whose roles require safeguarding awareness, training and certification; a second representative for vulnerable adults and a third is the children's representative.

The Safeguarding Team, supported by other members of the congregation, has been instrumental in facilitating Diocesan safeguarding training across RNWK Group and the Deanery.





Easter Cross at our 2019 service – members of the congregation placed flowers on the cross as an act of prayer and worship.



Our improvised 2021 Christingle service - celebrating outside due to Covid restrictions cancelling our planned indoor service at very short notice on Christmas Eve.



Our Harvest Festival service 2022 – we plough the fields and scatter the good seed on the land.