



The Bishop's Statement Vacancy in the benefice of St Barnabas Sutton

The Bishop's Statement is in relation to the post, the needs of the diocese and the wider interests of the Church. In considering whether to offer this post to any applicant, the Diocesan Bishop will wish to satisfy himself that the applicant is able and willing to work positively and purposefully with the [Diocesan Vision](#).

The Benefice

St Barnabas Sutton was incorporated into the Sutton Team Ministry in 2007. A review of the Team Ministry in 2017 led to the recommendation, welcomed by all the PCCs, that the Team be dissolved and re-constituted as a Group Ministry. However, it is now seen that St Barnabas is too small to stand on its own and so a benefice with St Nicholas Sutton is proposed. Each parish will still have its own dedicated minister, but they will each have a colleague. The aim is for the two clergy to relate as equals whatever the formal legal position is. This structure will also remove the need for both churches to have Holy Communion each week, which is getting harder to cover during holidays, and it is hoped this will enable more lay leadership of worship.

Having had their own Vicar for the last 7 years, the parish has recovered confidence. We are looking for a priest to continue this dedicated care while encouraging the church in mission. As relationships of trust grow, they will be ready to explore the next steps in growth and discipleship.

The Deanery

The parish is part of Sutton Deanery and Revd Kevin Lewis, Area Dean writes:

There are 14 parishes and 18 worshipping communities in the deanery of Sutton, reflecting the breadth of theology across evangelical and catholic strands, and the breadth of church style from contemporary to traditional worship. As a Chapter we celebrate that which unites us, and meet regularly to eat and share our experiences together because it is only in building relationships that we can learn from each other and work together.

The deanery consists of the entire London Borough of Sutton (plus a tiny bit of Merton), containing within it not only Sutton town centre, but also at least 6 small town centres across its largely suburban area. There is great socio-economic diversity, with not all areas reflecting the perception of Sutton as a leafy middle-class commuter-belt borough. There is increasing diversity in population, which is slowly being reflected across some of the church congregations.

We look forward to welcoming new colleagues who seek to work together across and within this theological and geographical spread, helping our parishes to adapt to a changing world as we seek to proclaim the Gospel and serve the people of Sutton.

The needs of the Diocese & the wider church

All appointments in the Southwark Diocese take place within the context of the diocesan vision: [Christ Centred, Outward Focused](#). This next evolution of our vision comes as we continue to walk together, discerning God's wisdom and guidance in our shared pilgrimage of faith. Keeping Christ as our centre and the focus of unity, we will continue to turn outwards - seeking to support, encourage, resource and learn from one another as we serve our parishes and God's world. Church is formed when people gather around the person of Jesus Christ, drawn to worship him and join in his work as he meets human hurts and hopes. Jesus walks with us and is also waiting for us in places of mission, healing, reconciliation, learning and worship. It is important that all clergy in the diocese have a good understanding of the aims and objectives of the vision.

Finance

As of 2016, a new system of financial contributions towards the parish share 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. The parish of St Barnabas Sutton made a pledge of £10,128 for 2025, a 20% increase 2024. With the new provision of a House for Duty priest this contribution will be 21% of this parish's indicative costs, which for 2025 will be £47,300. Whilst the last years have been challenging for parish and diocesan finances, we encourage all parishes to give both generous and realistic pledges in proportion to their means and each year to aim to take a step towards become self-financing. We would expect the new incumbent to work with the lay leaders and congregation to encourage a pattern of generous giving and nurture and strengthen the church's financial position.

Collaborative Ministry

I am looking to appoint clergy in this Area who can 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 who can 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rosemarie Mallett". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, looped 'M' at the end.

The Right Reverend Dr Rosemarie Mallett, Bishop of Croydon

March 2025