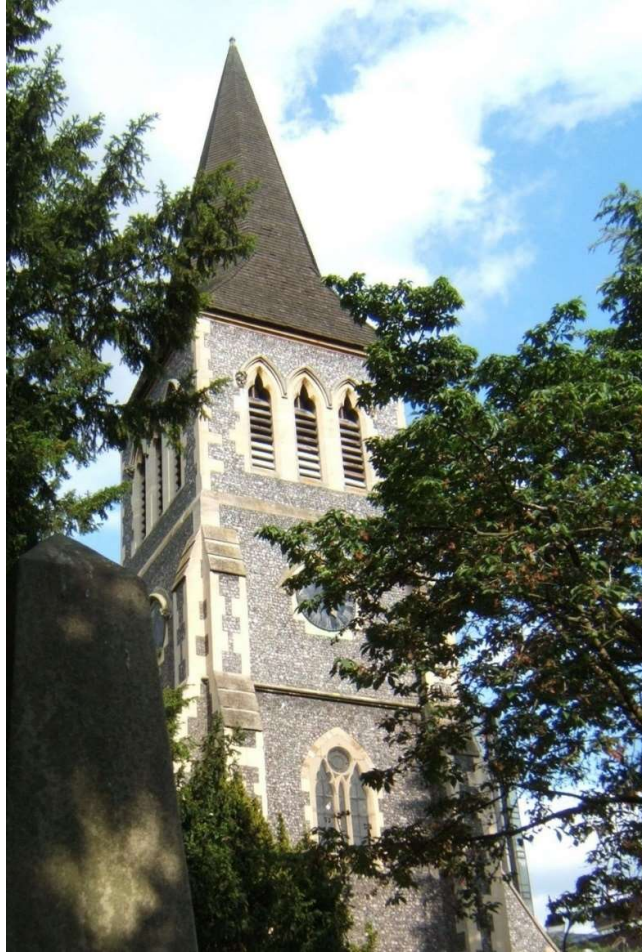


St Nicholas Church, Sutton

Parish Profile



*A community of faith celebrating God's love and
sharing it with others as we seek to
Worship...Encourage...and Serve*



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Welcome to St Nicholas Church.....

Our Mission

St Nicholas Church, a Christian heart for our town, worshipping, praying and serving here for a millennium – loving God and loving our neighbour.



Decorating the church

Our Vision



St Nicholas Church, embracing, encouraging, and uniting people – a place of prayer and meeting in this community, for this community – our Rector being the ‘town centre’ priest.

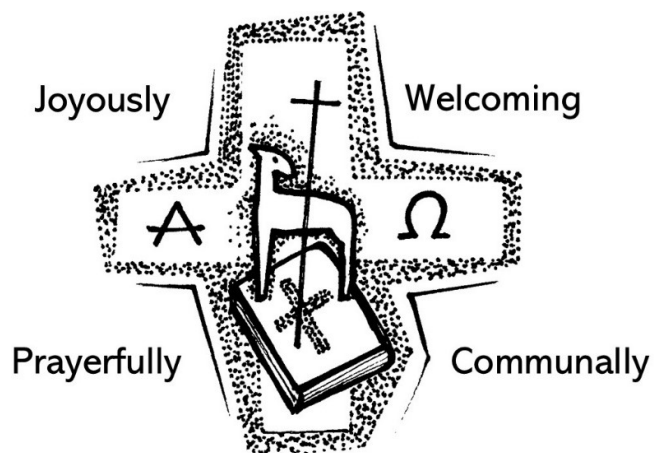
Our Mission Priorities

Embracing Providing a safe and welcoming space for all to come together.

Encouraging Caring for those in need whatever their background.

Uniting Working well together, and especially with our ecumenical partners and organisations across our parish.

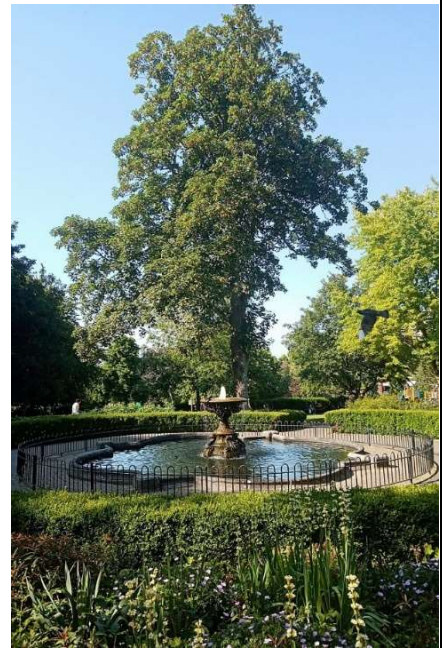
Our Values How we will go about our mission.



The Community of Sutton

Sutton is a town in the London Borough of Sutton in South London. It is the administrative headquarters of the Outer London borough, on the lower slopes of the North Downs.

Today, Sutton has a library, several works of public art and four conservation areas. The centre of Sutton is fast changing as commercial pressures and changing lifestyles mean there is less demand for vast retail outlets and large office buildings. These are being replaced by high-rise accommodation, whose inhabitants are often only living in the town for a short period. This has meant that the population living close to St Nicholas has grown and is continuing to grow. Over the past decade Sutton's population has become more ethnically diverse, with large numbers of Hong Kongers choosing to settle in town, adding vibrancy and introducing Chinese restaurants, Majong and Tai Chi clubs. Sutton railway station is the largest station in the borough, offering frequent services by Southern and Thameslink to Central London and other destinations, including Wimbledon and Luton. Sutton is also well connected by local bus services and has good access to Gatwick and Heathrow Airports.



Manor Park
Photo Credit: A P Monblat

Sutton town centre has a range of commercial and retail outlets, with coffee shops, restaurants, bars, colleges, 2 multi-screen cinemas, many sports centres and gyms, both public and privately owned. Sutton is home to several international companies, for example, Reed Recruitment Agency and UK HQ of Subsea 7, an international deep sea pipeline company. HMP High Down and Downview are situated on the southern border of the town (just inside the Diocese of Guildford). Gander Green Lane, the home of Sutton United Football Club is also part of the town. St Helier Hospital, which has an A&E department, is just outside the town. There is a Holiday Inn and a Premier Inn situated close to St Nicholas. Sutton has several parks, of which Manor Park and Sutton Green are in walking distance from the town centre.

There are many schools in the Borough, including some church primary schools, plus a variety of nurseries and pre-schools. The borough boasts some of the best secondary schools in the country, including several grammar schools. Within our parish there are no church schools but we have two primary, and three secondary, including Sutton High and Sutton Grammar, and a potential to build much closer links with them.



Parish boundary – cross marks church location

Sutton is home to the Royal Marsden Hospital and the Institute of Cancer Research, which are not within our parish boundary. Future plans for Sutton, as of 2024, include creating the world's second largest cancer research campus.

One of the joys of living in the borough is that, in only a ten-minute car journey south from this built up area, you can be surrounded by lavender fields, small holdings and the edges of the North Downs. Also, London's Victoria Station is only a twenty minute train ride away, gateway to the West End theatres and shops.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sutton,_London

The People of St Nicholas Church.....

Reader

Jeff Richards

Jeff Richards works as a lay pioneer through the charity SUTTONfx on various community projects within central Sutton. He assists in Sunday Worship and other Services when required. He also leads the youth group SPECTRUM.



Parish Administrator



The church employs a part-time Parish Administrator, currently Ginny Haizelden.

Caretaker



The church employs a part-time caretaker, currently Stephen Baskett, whose work is mainly focused on the Community Hall.



The Church Family

The congregation is increasingly diverse and multi-cultural, with the majority of people being mature in years.



Above and below: The children's groups in progress, including decorating window sills in the church at Easter and Christmas.

The children's group, JAM (Jesus And Me), meets weekly during the principal Sunday morning service during term time, while a second group, SPECTRUM is aimed at slightly older children. These groups also offer a potential for ministry to young parents.

JAM's mission statement is:

'to show young people that church and Christians can be fun, whilst equipping them to serve God at home, in our church, at school and in society at large'.



We have been through some challenging times in recent years, certainly not helped by the pandemic, but we are looking forward to a new season in which we can heal, building and growing together numerically, emotionally and spiritually.

There are plans to unite St Nicholas with the neighbouring parish of St Barnabas as a United Benefice. St Barnabas would retain its house for duty priest and we hope the two clergy will enjoy having a colleague, while each having their own church to lead.

Linked Organisations

The Friends of St Nicholas Churchyard are group that works to preserve and improve the historic churchyard of St Nicholas Church while liaising with Sutton Council who are responsible for the upkeep of the churchyard and its boundaries.



Bulb planting

SuttonFX is a Christian lead initiative to strengthen connections within our community. One on-going project is the Dr George Rice Community Garden, which was reclaimed from an abandoned piece of land close to the rectory garden, to create an accessible pocket garden for children and young adults with Special Educational Needs.



Tidying up the Community Garden

Sutton Soup raises money for local good causes inviting people to come along and pay £5 for a meal of homemade soup and bread; listen to four pitches from local people who need funding for a project that benefits Sutton. Afterwards, everybody votes, and the best pitch of the four Sutton Community projects receives all the money raised.

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



Sutton Soup

The St Nicholas branch of the Mothers' Union tries to raise awareness of the work of the MU and its aim to bring about justice, challenge prejudice and advocate change. It does this by fundraising for MU projects, through sales, fun days and selling their world-famous homemade Christmas puddings. It engages with the local community through events such as Easter Egg hunts and making up kits for care leavers.



Members of the Mother's Union

Church Activities

St Nicholas has a thriving Mothers' Union, a Men's Group, an associated Scout Group, and a "Friends of St Nicholas Churchyard" group. The church is the base from which Sutton Street Pastors work, ministering to those in need of help on Fridays and Saturdays. St Nicholas supports the work of the local Foodbank as well as several other charities each year, including Sutton Community Works and the Childrens Society. St Nicholas has links to local colleges, Orchard Hill College, Carshalton College, Sutton College and Greenholm School, providing volunteering opportunities. There are regular supper talks, open church days and an annual Patronal Lunch. St Nicholas has hosted "Sutton Soup" since it began in 2016, raising thousands of pounds for local charities.



Students from Carshalton College helping get ready for Sutton Soup.



Local artists repainting the walls along the path leading to the church



The Blessing of the pathway after being repainted



Where is my name art activity



The Patronal Lunch



Sculpture of Anne Boleyn by Dennis Huntley on display in the church



Blessing the pumps at the local Robin Hood pub



Southwark MU Festival
at the Cathedral



Sutton School Old Boys
Remembrance Service
in church



MU Summer Fete



Meeting for Bible Study



Easter Service



Christingle Service



MU members Writing
letters to go into the
Care Leavers Kits



Prayer Group meeting



'The Chatty Café' – a local enterprise
that brings people together socially
once a week.



Socialising after Services



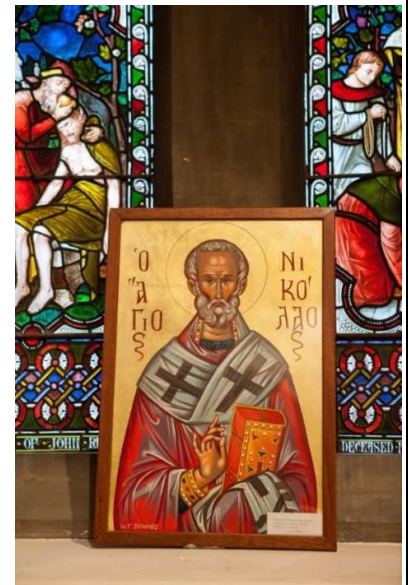
Cubs and Beavers

Services

St Nicholas holds a central and eucharistic tradition. The main service is from common worship which follows the lectionary, and we use the Hymns Old and New.

Sundays

Since the pandemic and during the vacancy, there has generally been just one service of Holy Communion, at St Nicholas on Sunday at 10:30am (*Average attendance 35*).



The children's group, JAM (Jesus And Me), meets weekly during the principal Sunday morning service during term time, while a second group, SPECTRUM is aimed at slightly older children. The members of these groups love to share what they have been learning with the congregation at the end of the service, and the congregation is always enthusiastic to hear all they have achieved.



Prior to the pandemic there was also a spoken service of Holy Communion at 9am, following the Book of Common Prayer.

Once a month, the 10:30am took the form of all-age worship which at present has been put on hold.

In addition, there was a weekly united service at 6:30pm at one of the churches in the Local Ecumenical Partnership.



Childrens' corner during services

Thursdays



10am Communion (this is a spoken service) followed by a time for socialising and private prayer (*Average attendance 16*)

St Nicholas Church is the 'Civic' church for the borough and has a good relationship with the Mayor and the Council. The Rector regularly leads the Remembrance Service on Armistice Day in Sutton High Street.

In recent years, we have not hosted many occasional offices. In 2024 we held a very joyful baptism, one wedding and two funerals. We did present four candidates for confirmation (three young people and one adult) who were prepared by our Reader Jeff. Some pastoral work and visiting have been undertaken via support by a Minister from the Croydon Area.



Confirmation Candidates confirmed at Southwark Cathedral

St Nicholas is part of a Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) with Trinity Church (URC and Methodist) and Sutton Baptist Church, all three churches are in close proximity to each other in central Sutton. This continues to be an important part of the life of the churches (the initial Covenant was signed in 1971) and St Nicholas is committed to furthering this partnership. Its activities are overseen by an Ecumenical Church Council with representatives from all three churches. United services (morning and evening) are held on specific occasions, such as the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Christian Aid Week, Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Harvest, Remembrance Sunday, with a united carol service before Christmas. Study courses are also arranged for Advent and Lent, plus occasional joint social events.

St Nicholas has a substantial pipe organ and an electric piano/keyboard. Some of the congregation are members of the Trinity Church Festival Choir - a subsidiary of their main choir at Trinity Church – which brings together singers from various churches to perform choral pieces at special services.



Finances

The finances of St Nicholas Church are essentially stable. As with many churches, the income primarily comes from regular giving which in recent years has declined. This is mainly the result of those who have left the church (moved away or sadly died), many who were generous in their giving.

The church has always been careful as regards expenditure but has not been able to avoid the recent inflationary pressures particularly with regards to heating and lighting.

We are mindful, however, of the fact that Quinquennial surveys indicate that costly work will be needed on the church building in the coming years.

We have a church hall (known as the St Nicholas Community Hall) which contributes to the overall finances although, being a 50-year-old building, has recently needed much attention to bring it up to current standards.

The church has always prided itself on paying its Parish Support Fund in full each year. However, the amount we have been able to pledge in the past couple of years has, with the Archdeacon's agreement, been significantly reduced to reflect our lower congregation and reduced giving.

Overall, the funds we currently hold are financial assets of just over £200,000, recently boosted by legacies of over £37,000, while the church hall is valued at £1 million.



The Church and Associated Buildings

St Nicholas Church, Sutton is a Grade II* listed parish church in the centre of Sutton. It is the oldest of the three town centre churches in Sutton and is surrounded by a small ancient graveyard, which is wooded. It also contains some lawned areas with benches. Two well used public footpaths run through these grounds.



The present building stands on a site that has been used as a church since the Saxon times – an earlier church occupied the site until the nineteenth century, and was replaced by the present church building in 1864. Edwin Nash designed the new church in the Gothic style, incorporating monuments and piscina from the old building. It was constructed with dressed flint and stone dressings.



In 1893 the North porch, a new vestry and choir room, and a large basement for the organ blowing plant were built. The new organ with three manuals and fifty-five stops was installed in 1899.

Many memorials and tomb stones within the church and churchyard date back to the 17th and 18th centuries when St Nicholas church was in the countryside and was used by wealthy London merchants and administrators.



Gibson mausoleum - erected in 1777 to contain the remains of James Gibson, London wine merchant, and his family



The tomb of Cecil Talbot dates from 1720



The yearly inspection of the Gibson Tomb



However, the church is in need of some urgent repairs; for example, to the Victorian flint facing, which is cracking and bulging in several places, and to the sandstone louvres of the West Tower. The Quinquennial inspection was done in 2024 and details all the repairs that are required.



The Community Hall and Rectory

The Community Hall, built in the 1970s at the same time as the Rectory, is used extensively by the church and local community. In particular, families with young children attend the Montessori pre-school and baby ballet classes. The 1st/16th Sutton Scouts have been linked to St Nicholas since the start of scouting. They use the hall several times a week and store their equipment in the storeroom at the side of the garage. The Elim Gospel Church meets every Sunday afternoon in the hall for worship.



The Community Hall



Rectory and garden

The Rectory, adjacent to the Community Hall, is also nearby, but sheltered from the town centre. The Rectory is double-glazed and has an enclosed garden. It has four bedrooms, a bathroom and a shower room, a kitchen, partitionable reception room, an office and off-street parking for two cars.



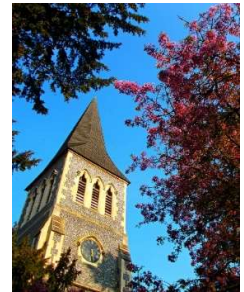
Sitting room and kitchen

Our Mission Priority Areas and Goals in Summary

During 2024, we have started to develop a Mission Action Plan.

In the next three years we will be focusing on:

- Embracing - Providing a safe and welcoming space for all to come together, by providing a range of ways of growing in the Christian faith for all.
- Encouraging - Caring for those in need whatever their background, by providing pastoral care via a team approach and develop resources and knowledge of local sources of support.
- Uniting - Working well together, and especially with our ecumenical partners and organisations across the parish. By growing the relationships with our three stakeholder hall user (Elim Chinese Church, Montessori Nursery, the Scouts) and Sutton College. And engaging with the civic life of the town.



Sutton Map Summary



Person Specification

The people of St Nicholas Church are looking to appoint an engaging and innovative Rector who will be able to strike a balance between maintaining and honouring the traditions of St Nicholas Church whilst finding creative new ways to enrich our worship and grow our congregation.

The rector will:

- **Be warm, sociable, enthusiastic and approachable**
- **Be attentive to the needs of those in the St Nicholas community and those in the wider community of Sutton**
- **Work to ensure that St Nicholas Church is at the heart of good works in the borough through initiation and collaboration with community groups on projects designed to support those experiencing hardships and disadvantage**
- **Preach in such a way that supports, encourages, develops, nurtures and challenges everyone in their journey with God and in their Faith, ensuring that St Nicholas Church is a church for all**
- **Articulate our shared vision for St Nicholas Church and have the resilience, determination and tenacity to help us together to realise it**
- **Support the Pastoral reorganisation as St Nicholas becomes a Benefice with St Barnabas Church**

The Thoughts of Our Congregation



Where we are now...	Where we want to go...	Where we want to be...
<p>Diverse</p> <p>Active prayer lists</p> <p>Small and medium congregations</p> <p>Community Centre</p> <p>Friendly and caring</p> <p>Community outreach and garden</p> <p>Warm welcome</p> <p>Ageing congregation</p> <p>Active Mothers Union</p> <p>Active Sunday School</p> <p>Struggling to find volunteers</p> <p>The church boiler and electrics are old and need replacing</p>	<p>Increase congregation</p> <p>Attract more volunteers and leaders (social events and fund-raising teams)</p> <p>Foster enthusiasm and promote the church</p> <p>Reinstate our musical traditions (Choir)</p> <p>Increase younger worshippers through links with the Scouts & Guides and active Youth Leaders</p> <p>Support activities for the elderly</p> <p>Grow income, organise events</p> <p>Attract more families</p> <p>Expand Outreach Projects</p>	<p>Full and Joyful church</p> <p>Enthusiasm for our Mission</p> <p>Centre of faith in the community</p> <p>Sharing God's love in action</p> <p>Vibrant, outward looking congregation</p> <p>Prayer Groups</p> <p>Activities and days out</p> <p>Children's and Youth activities</p> <p>Continue our outreach Activities</p> <p>Form new outreach projects</p> <p>Monthly Church magazine</p> <p>Special Occasions parade of scouts</p> <p>Have a choir</p> <p>Updated Church Directory</p>

Our congregation have said they would like our new Rector to be.....

“Someone who has a vision for St Nicholas Church.”

“An inclusive, enthusiastic and engaging leader who is keen to grow our church family and community in new ways, as well as reignite the existing groups.”



“Someone who sees the potential of this church and every one of its members and develops that potential to the full.”

“Someone who maintains our working relationship with other churches in the community.”

We asked our congregation what skills and qualities they would like our new vicar to possess.

The bigger the word below, the more important it is to our Congregation!



Useful Links

There is an integrated neighbourhood team population profile at:

<http://data.sutton.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/INT-Population-Profile-Central-Sutton-Online.pdf>

1st/16th Sutton Scout Group <https://1st16thsuttonscouts.org.uk/>

Friends of St Nicholas Church Yard <https://churchyardfriends.com/>

SUTTONfx <https://www.suttonfx.com/>

Chatty Café <https://www.suttonfx.com/current-projects/chatty-cafe/>

Hall Users:

- [Montessori Children's House](#)
- [ELIM Chinese church -Sutton](#)
- [All Aboard Club](#)
- [Baby Ballet](#)

Church Users:

- [Sutton Soup](#)
- [Sutton Street Pastors](#)

Other linked charities:

- [Sutton Schools work](#)
- [Sutton Community Works](#)
- [Cruse - Sutton](#)

Church links:

- [Churches Uniting in Sutton \(CUCS \)](#)
- [Churches in Sutton/Cheam \(CTSC \)](#)
- [Diocese of Southwark](#)