

St Luke's Church, Whyteleafe



**St Luke's Church
Whyteleafe**

Parish Profile

Introduction

Set in a beautiful area of semi-rural Surrey with close proximity to the Surrey Hills, St Luke's church is located in the village of Whyteleafe, Surrey on the northern edge of the Reigate episcopal area of the Southwark Diocese.



Built in 1866, St Luke's Church was a welcome addition to Whyteleafe. The railway had come some ten years before and large Victorian mansions were being built at strategic points along the Caterham Valley. It was George Drew who, in 1863 obtained the release of the land which now forms the church and vicarage sites, the Bishop gave his consent to the formation of a new parish, and on 6th December 1866 the church of St Luke was formally constituted.

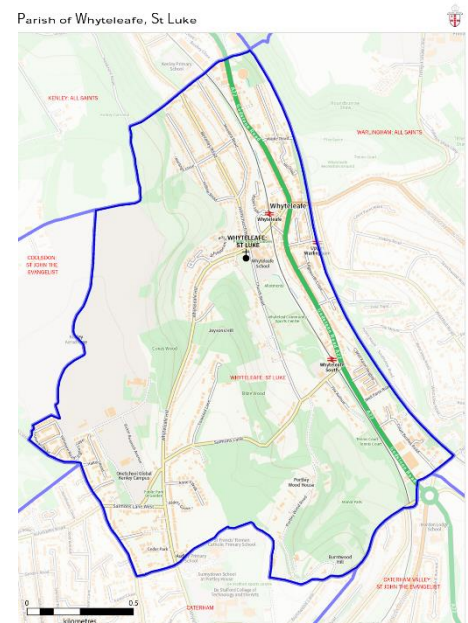
A recent Quinquennial survey, indicating that the condition of the church fabric is close to being perfect, is testimony to the continued dedication and hard work of many parishioners in the maintenance of this lovely church and churchyard which is a focal point at the heart of the community.

Whyteleafe

Whyteleafe is a village in the Tandridge district of Surrey and is also part of the Whyteleafe ward.

In the 2021 Census, Whyteleafe had a population of 3,172 although this number increases each year due to constant new housing being built. There is a wide variety of housing types. The average age in Whyteleafe is 35.8 years although the average age of the congregation is 68 years. This leaves plenty of scope for expansion!

Whyteleafe has a friendly atmosphere with a busy high street including a Post Office, various restaurants and cafes, flower shop, cake shop, chemist and award winning fish and chip shop. There is an over-subscribed local primary school next door to the church, a Free Church, two pubs – although one is more of a micro-brewery, and a successful football club. There is also an active Scout Hut, hosting yoga and other classes, next door to a busy allotment area.





St Lukes is well known in the area, hiring out its Church Hall to the wider local community for various classes, events and functions. There is a plan to expand and update its facilities, to appeal to an even wider audience.



With good mainline rail services to Croydon and London, served by two local stations (Whyteleafe and Upper Warlingham) and the close proximity of both the M25 and M23 motorways provides an easy commute to London, Gatwick Airport and further afield.

About the Church

Working Together

It's important to appreciate that historically St Luke's has worked closely with nearby St Peter and St. Paul's church Chaldon, and since 2019 has been formalised as a Benefice to the success of both churches. This link has since developed into a close sharing relationship between the two churches. The vicars of both churches meet regularly on a weekly basis to discuss issues of mutual interest.

Personnel

In the absence of the incumbent, services are being undertaken by the Revd. Sara Goatcher (retired priest with Permission to Officiate), Revd. Helen Burnett (vicar of St. Peter and St Paul's Chaldon) and additional clergy as necessary.

The churchwardens are John Ritchie and Mark Brown assisted by deputy churchwarden Patti Hurst.

Alison Pannett is the Treasurer, Parish Administrator and currently PCC Secretary.

Helen Wheelwright is the church Safeguarding Officer.

There is an active and engaged PCC which coordinates the various group activities as noted in the Report to the Annual Parish Church Meeting. (see attachment)



Congregation

The Electoral Roll of the church is 54. Service attendance averages about 30 to 40 parishioners at regular services.

Financial

While the church has a well-managed sound financial base it nevertheless, like many other churches, has its challenges. We maintain our contributions to the Parish Support Fund increasing it most years where practicable.



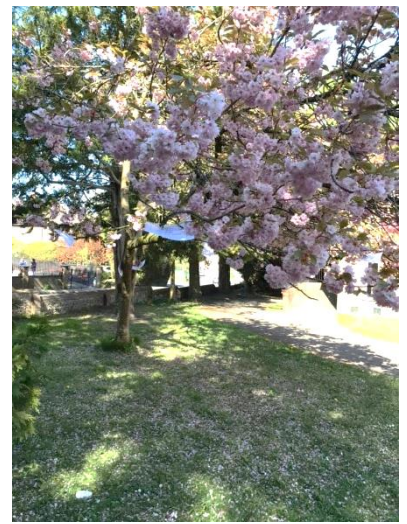
Royal Air Force & Royal Air Force Association

St. Luke's has strong links with the RAF and RAFA and displays a Book of Remembrance and Memorial Boards for those airmen killed in action who were based at RAF Kenley.

Additionally, we are proud of the well maintained official Airmen's War Grave site within the St Luke's churchyard

Churchyard

The churchyard is still open for burials and is well maintained by our Churchyard Manager John Jackson and greatly valued by the local and wider community. We are regularly support by our parishioners and friends with an active Root and Branch Club who are dedicated to maintaining our beautiful churchyard throughout the year.



Vicarage

The vicarage is an attractive 4 bedroomed family home, with ample living accommodation including a separate office area and cloakroom, with a well fitted kitchen and adjacent utility room. There is also an easily maintained flat garden, garage and parking for several cars. The vicarage is adjacent to the church.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is an essential element of our responsibility to the congregation and general community.



Worship at St Luke's

St Luke's is a warm-hearted, welcoming church. As a church community, we are on a journey together committed to serving both God and those in the wider community. We express our love for God in a rich variety of worship – from the beauty and rich tradition of the Anglican liturgy to the informality of Café Church.

With the emphasis on relaxed and enjoyable services, there are Communion services at 9.30am each Sunday. Our rhythm of services has been:

1 st Sunday of the month	Communion Service
2 nd Sunday of the month	Communion Service
3 rd Sunday of the month	Café Style Communion Service
4 th Sunday of the month	All Age Communion Service

Sunday school is provided for on 1st and 2nd Sundays and children are integrated into the services on 3rd and 4th Sundays. This is an area, like so many child based activities, which needs resourcing and development.



Bubble Church for children under 8 years old ran on the first Sunday of the month starting at 9.30am followed by the Communion Service. This has had to be paused to await the appointment of a Children's Leader.



Lay participation at services is encouraged and welcomed by the congregation who participate as welcomers, servers, Bible readers, leading intercessions and assisting in administering the sacrament. We also have a team that prepares refreshments each week after the morning service in the church hall.

Across the ecumenical churches in the area, Morning Prayer is said on Wednesday mornings at 8.30am – the venue changes each month to encompass all participating denominations. This is part of the Caterham Churches Together Group. There is also the local Caterham Group of Anglican churches

Joint services are held with St Peter & St Paul's, Chaldon from time to time.

Worship at St Luke's is supported by either the church organist or our keyboard player who also runs Luke's Larks a small community choir that augments our singing on high and holy days.

Whyteleafe Primary School is a non-church school located next to the church with which we have a very good relationship. At Christmas and Easter, St Luke's hosts four services for the school where children participate through drama and song in the telling of the Christian stories. This enables every child in this non-faith school to understand the meaning of both seasons.

We also deliver monthly assemblies to 420 children at the school.



Additional Services

We usually hold extra services for:

Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday (a version of reflective and interactive Stations of the Cross)

Ascension Day, Battle of Britain (due to our association with RAF Kenley and held around the airman's war graves)

Pet Blessing Service (held in the churchyard)

All Souls Service, Remembrance Day, Carols by Candlelight Service

All Age Nativity, Christingle, Midnight Mass and Christmas Day Communion

During Lent we join with other churches in our group to offer a 'Lent course' and other joint activities.

Tuesday evenings are usually reserved at church for Bible study sessions/conversation and Communion evenings....and other kinds of theological input led by the clergy.



Other Church Activities

Pancake Party Every Shrove Tuesday we invite children in the community to come and enjoy free pancakes and fun activities.

School Visits Our relationship with the Kenley Revival Project means that school parties and youth groups often come and visit our RAF war graves. These visits are supported with focused talks and activities to ensure our war heroes are remembered.

Welcome to Christmastide Organised by Luke's Larks, with poems, skits and Christmas carols at the beginning of the Christmas season. This is hugely popular with the members of the local community.

Knitting Ninjas Knitting Ninjas gather regularly to knit and chat at the church run by members of our congregation. Their creations are donated to premature baby units at local hospitals and other places in need. They also make Easter and Christmas gifts to sell on behalf of the church and local charities.

Ladies Fellowship The group meets fortnightly at the Church Hall, with talks on a variety of interesting subjects and also organises meals out to local restaurants.

Men's Breakfast Our Churchwardens organise regular breakfast meetings at the local café for those interested in fellowship and food!

Outreach

Outreach to the local community (including the Whyteleafe Village Council) and beyond is an important aspect of the life of St Luke's. The Church has an active community life with its congregation focused on a sense of generosity and a commitment to the life of Christ and his purpose for his people. Many parishioners give food and financial help to supporting local services such as The Whyteleafe Community Hub – a charity which began during lockdown and supports those in need in the parish.



The previous incumbent was Chaplain to 450 Squadron Royal Airforce Cadets and it is hoped that our new vicar will also take on this role – ministering to over 60, 11-18 year olds who meet at Kenley airfield.

Fund raising events for national and international charities take place at St Luke's throughout the year and parishioners are always supportive. The proceeds from coffee mornings and collections, are donated to a wide variety of selected charities including the Children's Society, Welcare, Christian Aid, Royal British Legion, League of Friends for Caterham Dene Hospital and COAT (Caterham Overseas Aid Trust) which supports a number of different charities.

The Future

Our Mission Action Plan (see attachment) describes our plans to develop our offering of worship and activities to young families in Whyteleafe which began through an after school club, 'Lions and Lambs', on Fridays. This as well as our toddler group "Little Lukes" has had to be paused to await the appointment of a Children's Leader.

Our website and social media platforms are regularly updated reflecting our commitment with the wider community to maximise exposure of St Luke's. This is an area which is we are currently exploring further with new and refreshing ideas with our Marketing Committee.

We actively aim to future proof the church through exploring different ways to further our outreach in the local community.

The on going reordering project for the future of St Luke's Church envisages developing and improving facilities for the church and church hall. This includes our planned re-landscaping to enhance the visibility of the church and access to the churchyard area, ensuring we meet our MAP (Mission Action Plan) aims.



Our Commitment to You

We appreciate that to minister a church on part-time hours is a tall order and we are committed not only to helping you in your ministry but also to promote a successful work life balance.