

The Parish of Saint Andrew and Saint Mark Surbiton

Parish Profile

Worship Witness Welcome



Welcome to the Parish of Surbiton Saint Andrew and Saint Mark

We are traditional in our liturgy
with a strong Eucharistic and musical tradition,

but liberal in our theology
and proud to be part of the Inclusive Church Network.

It is important to us that we are, and are seen to be, a community in which people of all faiths and none are welcome to explore the meaning of Christianity, regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or lifestyle.

We believe that our two parish churches should be both places of worship and also a resource for the wider community and that we as a congregation should strive to serve God by serving that community.

We are praying for a priest who shares our values to join us and to lead us as we grow in faith.



Worship

We are an inclusive liberal church, flexible and forward thinking, yet rooted in tradition. We welcome everyone, and by welcoming others, we welcome Christ. Our congregation encompasses Anglo-Catholics to Evangelicals and those who doubt, question and explore in their journey of faith. We learn from each other and respect our range of views. Our PCC enthusiastically resolved that Prayers of Love and Faith could be used in our parish churches for blessings of same-sex couples.

We endeavour to convey our deep and wide love for all people. Our worship style has adapted to meet the needs of those who enter our doors. We are traditional and Anglican, but have never been afraid to try new things. We enjoy reasoned theological exploration.

We are fortunate to have two churches in our parish, allowing for a variety of ways to meet God. An enthusiastic melee of young children and their parents and carers sing action songs in informal family worship at St Mark's. At St Andrew's we have a traditional Sung Eucharist, truly Anglican in sacrament and word. Here you will find a robed choir, vested clergy and servers, bells and candles as well as incense at festivals.

Once a month, the congregation joins together in a family-friendly Sung Eucharist where you may find the processions negotiating small admirers by the altar and pushchairs in the aisle.

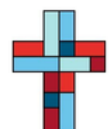
One Sunday a month, we have Choral Evensong and services on the other Sunday evenings are Compline, Quiet Prayer, or Healing with Laying On of Hands. We use the BCP at other daytime services during the week. A thoughtful 'Blue Christmas' service precedes our usual celebrations.



We have a rich musical tradition and music is performed to a high standard, under the supervision of our Director of Music and organist, Simon Harvey, who is a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists. The choir has a repertoire ranging from Renaissance to baroque to contemporary.

St Andrew's and St Mark's also encourages lay ministry at all levels in the parish. There are nine holders of the Bishop's Certificate in Discipleship with another candidate due to complete in June 2026. Two of them, along with another member of the congregation, are currently in discernment for ordained ministry. A number of lay people serve in the parish as deacons, sacristans, chalice assistants and visitors. Three of whom recently had their service recognised by its affirmation during a Sunday service. It is hoped that the focus on learning and development in lay ministry will continue under the leadership of the new incumbent.

Bible study groups are well attended and knowledgably led. Inquiring and questioning gatherings lead to much discussion and digression as we share spiritual insights and interpretations. Some people have also followed the Emmaus course.



Our congregation

We are one congregation worshipping at two churches. Many of those who worship with us live outside the parish, attracted by our style of worship and by our liberal and inclusive attitudes.

In 2025, average attendance at Choral Eucharist at St. Andrew's (outside the major festivals) was 82 adults and 5 children and at the family communion at St. Mark's it was 23 adults and 17 children. On the first Sunday of the month the "all-age" communion at St Mark's attracted 70 adults and 21 children. On these days there is also a quieter Service of the Word at St. Andrew's, at which there is often also a baptism. When there was no baptism 20-30 people attended this service.

The small number of children at St Andrew's reflects a very small number of older children and teenagers. However, the parish has joined the diocesan "Youth Ministry in Communion" programme and has recently acquired a part-time youth worker.

There is also a dip in our numbers in the thirty to fifty age range. Part of the reason for this may be that as families grow larger the cost of living in Surbiton comes to outweigh the many advantages that the area has to offer. This does make it difficult to find volunteers to do important jobs. With two parish churches we should have four churchwardens. At present, we are short of two churchwardens across the two churches, as well as three elected members of the PCC.



Our congregation: children and young people

Our consultation with the congregation and others tells us that people will welcome a vicar who will engage with children and young people. This is where we are now:

Toddlers Our Sunbeams “play and stay” group is very popular and often over-subscribed; but while we are pleased that some children have gone on to baptism we see this a service to the community rather than a recruiting ground for the congregation.

Young Children The children and their parents who come to St Mark’s for the family service clearly enjoy it, and while more people would always be welcome we regard this service as a success.

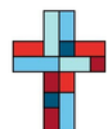
Sunday Club A Sunday school during the main service at St. Andrew’s is aimed at children of primary school age, but it is disappointing that very few attend. We need some prayerful thought as to how this situation might be addressed.

Children’s Choir The Children’s Choir, most of whose fifteen or so members are also at primary school, is more successful. It is a deliberately discontinuous operation so as to reduce the commitment expected of its members. It operates four times a year, with five weeks of rehearsal before participation in one or more services.

Teenagers A small but growing number of teenagers attend our services, showing a lively curiosity about our faith, and during Lent this year, a member of the congregation led a weekday discussion group to enable them to explore what it means to be a Christian.

We have recently welcomed Janice Kidney to work in this area. Janice is employed by Youth Ministry in Communion (YMIC). This is a growing network of churches in the Dioceses of Southwark and London, of which our parish is a full member, collaborating to share the love of God with young people. YMIC is pioneering sacramental youth ministry that enables evangelism and growth among young people aged 11-18.

Young adults There has also recently been a definite increase in the number of people in this age group at our main Sunday service, some of whom do not come from a “church” background. Our previous incumbent was keen to engage with this group, and we hope that this will continue.



Our ministry team

Rev'd. Janice Price, Non-Stipendiary Priest (Part-time)

Rev'd. Janice Price is Assistant Priest in the parish. She first attended St Andrew and St Mark at Epiphany 2006 and soon became involved as a Lay Reader/Minister. In 2016, she felt the call to offer for ordained ministry. Initially she felt her calling was to the Distinctive Diaconate. She was ordained Deacon in 2021 and then began to discover a further calling to be a Priest. She was ordained Priest in July 2023. In the parish, Janice has led the work on supporting charities and social action. For the last five years she was co-ordinator for the Christmas Day lunch. She is an active member of the Kingston Borough Council Inter-Faith Forum. She regularly presides and preaches in the parish and at other churches. She is an Assistant Chaplain at Kingston Hospital. Janice is a Vocations Adviser for Southwark Diocese. Prior to ordination, Janice was World Mission Adviser for the National Church Institutions of the Church of England. She was Director of Development for the Diocese of Worcester from 2000 to 2005 and worked ecumenically in international affairs and mission for Churches Together in Britain and Ireland from 2005 to 2009.

Rev'd. Carole Bourne, Non-Stipendiary Priest (Part-time)

Carole retired from full-time ministry in 2012 before joining us in 2014 where she felt very at home with the open, liberal approach to worship and Christian life. Carole helps with services at both churches and SASM primary school. Carole's focus has always been on social justice. She is a Kingston street pastor and has worked in local night shelters, besides working on the West Bank as an Ecumenical Accompanier. Carole is currently President of the National Committee of the Women's World Day of Prayer for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Jackie Robbs, Lay Reader

Jackie joined the parish in 2017. Her particular interest is in leading and encouraging groups for Bible study and prayer. A total of 20 people currently attend her groups, including four from Surbiton Hill Methodists and other neighbouring parishes. Jackie organises parish quiet days, leads evening services and preaches.

Toni Mitchell, Pastoral Lay Minister

Toni Mitchell received the Bishop's Commission as Pastoral Lay Minister in 2023. In addition to her pastoral duties in the parish, Toni is an Assistant Chaplain at Kingston Hospital. She is also a Vocations Advisor and Ministry Accompanier and is currently the Vice Chair of the Lay Council for Southwark Diocese.



Our administrative team

Jay and Janene are our Property and Lettings Manager and our Parish Office Administrator, respectively.

Jay's role includes looking after the premises at both the churches, alongside managing the hall hires and lettings as well as arranging building safety checks, ordering supplies, assisting with congregation requests, show-rounds of the hall spaces and invoicing regular hirers. Our halls currently bring in an income of over £125,000 per year.

Janene's role focuses on the administrative side of church life and services, preparing the pew sheets, orders of service, rotas, distribution of lessons, etc. in consultation with the ministry team. She enjoys her contact with members of the congregation and being part of the community.

Both Jay and Janene enjoy being empowered and go above and beyond for all our community. We are blessed to have them supporting our church.

Jay



Janene



Our buildings

Both of our parish churches were built in the nineteenth century and St Andrew's church is Grade II listed. St Mark's church was almost destroyed by incendiary bombs in 1940, but it was rebuilt as it was and then re-opened in 1960. However, by the early 21st century, it was clear that change was needed. Having spent two years discerning that our vision was to serve God by serving the people of Surbiton, we realised that our buildings were not fit for this purpose.

Some 15 years ago, two dilapidated church halls and the vicarage were sold off and both churches were transformed into much brighter and more welcoming spaces with more modern facilities. Both churches, for example, now have kitchens and licences for the sale of alcohol. Great care was taken, however, to retain the excellent acoustic for music at St. Andrew's.

St Andrew's gained a new meeting room at this time, whilst at St Mark's a spacious new hall was erected.

The new vicarage was built at this time in part of St Mark's churchyard and has four bedrooms, a separate study, a small garden, a garage and off-street parking.



Our financial position

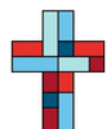
The Parish Accounts for 2025 show a healthy financial position both in terms of income and expenditure and balance sheet items. There are no outstanding large items of capital expenditure for our existing buildings as the roof and East windows at St Andrew's have been repaired. Quinquennial inspections have revealed only relatively minor maintenance issues apart from the need to survey the tower at St Mark's to check on its condition.

It is the aim of the PCC to match recurring income and expenditure over the medium term. Our main sources of income are from our congregation and the wider parish as planned giving, sundry donations and Gift Aid reclaimed, and rental income from lettings of both churches and halls.

In addition, our income is significantly boosted by dividends and interest received on investments and from sums on deposit. If this source of income were to reduce, we would need to encourage more planned giving, which has shown a slight downward trend recently.

We give generously to the Parish Support Fund (£114k in 2025). Other significant costs include maintenance of our buildings, office staff costs, cleaning, utilities and insurance. Given our commitment to providing excellent meeting spaces for the wider community in Surbiton, and our reliance on rental income, priority is given to maintaining a high standard of repair for our facilities. We are able to meet all clergy expenses in full.

Our balance sheet has been boosted by legacies in the three years 2023-25 (£746K in total) increasing our "surplus" funds after allowing for reserves. Initial discussions have taken place about the possible uses for these surplus funds, but no decisions have been taken. During 2025 we investigated purchasing a property previously used to house a curate, but were unable to proceed. The funds represent a significant opportunity to embark on new projects but will require some inspirational thinking, bold decision making and careful planning.



Surbiton, the place we serve

Surbiton is part of the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, but it retains its own identity. You are quite likely to meet someone you know if you walk between our churches and the occasional “Good Life” newspaper has a small town feel.

The town owes its existence to the railway, and the Art Deco station at the town centre is used over eight million times each year. There are commuters to London, as well as those who travel to Surbiton to work or study in Kingston.

Surbiton is a relatively affluent suburb with a parish population of around 16,500, of which 60% of adults have an educational qualification above A-level and 70% of those in work are in managerial, professional or technical occupations. About 80% of the parishioners live in flats and 40% live alone, and there are no doubt hidden pockets of deprivation and loneliness.

The town’s character is reflected in the fact that within the parish, there are some 14 pubs and bars and about 50 restaurants, cafés and take-aways. There are three supermarkets and a wide variety of smaller shops and other businesses.

In addition to the church primary school, the parish includes Maple Infants’ School (adjacent to the church school), Hollyfield School and Sixth Form Centre (close to St Mark’s church) and Lime Tree Primary School (which opened in 2012). We also have links with Surbiton High School, an independent girls’ school just outside the parish. Kingston University has two halls of residence in the parish, but it has proved difficult to establish meaningful contact with the university.

There are two Baptist churches linked to each other within the parish, whilst the YMCA has a hostel on Victoria Road (our “High Street”), which includes a gym and café open to the public. Other Anglican parishes in Surbiton are St. Matthew’s, in the south of the town, and Christ Church, which mainly encompasses the Berrylands residential area.



Church activities

Choir

In addition to the weekly rehearsals and services, the choir makes an annual visit, jointly with the adjacent parish of St Matthew, to sing Evensong in churches and cathedrals around the country. Currently we have three members of the choir on Choral Scholarships.

SASM school

Located close to St Andrew's church, St Andrew's and St Mark's (SASM) primary school is a thriving, values-driven school where over 350 children and adults learn, grow, and flourish together. Rooted in Christian ethos, the vision is inspired by John 10:10 "I have come in order that you might have life in all its fullness." The incumbent is an ex officio member of the school's governing board.

Mothers' Union

Having been one of the earliest established Mothers' Union branches in the UK, we are delighted that we continue to thrive and welcome new members, male and female, of any age. The branch (which includes members from St Matthew's, Surbiton) meets monthly.

Bible study group

We run house groups for those members of the congregation who wish to deepen their understanding of Christianity. Additionally, we run two Bible study groups in St. Mark's church, where, at each, a dozen or more people meet fortnightly to go through and discuss a book of the Bible in greater depth.

Volunteers

We have several teams of regular volunteers, who:

- Run the audio-visual system during services.
- Organise the churches' wonderful array of floral displays.
- Welcome our congregation at the morning services.
- Provide tea, coffee and biscuits after services, as well as a hot breakfast at St Mark's on the first Sunday of the month.
- Act as hosts at St Andrew's when the church is let for concerts.

In Lent this year, enthusiastic volunteers carried out a much-needed deep clean of St Andrew's church and we intend this to be the genesis of a more permanent arrangement at both churches.



Church activities: outreach

Sunbeams

Sunbeams stay-and-play toddler group is held weekly in St Mark's church hall. The group is run by volunteers from our church congregation and a warm welcome is extended to children from 0 to 3 years old, as well as their parents, grandparents and carers.

Christmas Day party

For many years the parish has organised a luncheon party on Christmas Day so that those who would otherwise be on their own can enjoy a traditional Christmas dinner in a convivial atmosphere. Latterly this has taken place in St Mark's hall and members of the congregation have cooked the meal, whilst others provide transport for those who need it.

Eco-church

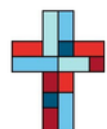
At St Andrew's and St Mark's, we have an eco committee and are seeking to be an Eco Church. The Church of England has an ambitious target for all parishes to be carbon neutral by 2030. If we can, we would like to meet that target.

Street pastors

A few members of our congregation are street pastors in Kingston. They work ecumenically to serve vulnerable people in need of assistance, especially young people enjoying the nightlife, and rough sleepers.

Mission Action Plan

A mission action plan was drafted at the end of 2018. However, it was overtaken by the Covid-19 pandemic and has not been revived.



Community use of our buildings

The fine acoustic of St Andrew's church makes it a popular venue for concerts and rehearsals. Thames Concerts is an annual series of professional recitals and chamber music. The highlight of their next season will be a visit from the celebrated baritone, Roderick Williams. They also organise occasional, free morning concerts by local school groups and others.

Other concerts at the church are given by local amateur orchestras and choirs. The church has tiered staging that can easily be erected and dismantled in the sanctuary for the latter.

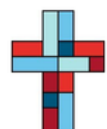
Also at St Andrew's, Dicky Birds is a commercially run pre- and after-school club, operating daily during term-time. This is used by children from our church school, as well as from Maple Infants.

Other groups use various buildings on a regular basis and St Mark's Hall in particular has a number of weekly users. This list shows the variety of community activities involved:

- Yoga and pilates
- Ballet classes
- Book/Speakers club
- Band rehearsals
- Children's acting classes
- Meditation
- First Aid classes
- Narcotics Anonymous
- Annual General meetings
- Property Management
- Tai-Chi classes
- Wellbeing meetings
- Children's Tutoring
- Sing and Sign baby classes
- Mini Athletics
- Messy Play
- Street dance classes
- BuggyFit
- Adult dance classes
- Kingston stitchers
- Healthcare workshops
- Singing workshops
- Fitness sessions
- National Childbirth Trust

St Mark's Hall is in high demand for children's parties at weekends. Meanwhile, the availability of catering facilities and alcohol licences at both churches means that those organising weddings or funerals can choose to provide refreshments next to the church.

The hall is also used for fundraising events for charities, which are often sponsored and supported by the parish.



Our vicar

Job description

Our new vicar will:

- Be a parish priest working in partnership with a supportive congregation
- Encourage others who may be called to ministry or service
- Encourage a wide spectrum of uses of our church buildings
- Maintain and strengthen our liturgical tradition
- Support our strong musical tradition in the mainstream of church choral music
- Be willing to reach out to the wider community, and other faith communities
- Help us to value children and young people as important members of our church
- Facilitate new initiatives to support older members of our parish
- Work alongside our parish school to provide theological leadership and pastoral care for both children and adults
- Work with the PCC to promote good governance of our parish, taking account of the members' responsibilities as charity trustees.

Person specification

Our new vicar will:

- Have a faith rooted in the Christian fundamentals of love and forgiveness
- Be a supporter of the principles of Inclusive Church
- Enjoy preaching theologically and spiritually stimulating sermons
- Have his or her own spiritual and emotional support mechanisms in place
- Enjoy working with articulate parishioners with their own viewpoints
- Be willing to talk about money
- Embrace the diverse needs of our wider community
- Enjoy life and take full advantage of holiday entitlement

Feedback from our congregation and community

