St Peter's Pembury
'Sharing God's Love'

The Parish of St. Peter, Pembury

Parish Profile 2026





St Peter's Church
Pembury
Kent
TN2 4PE

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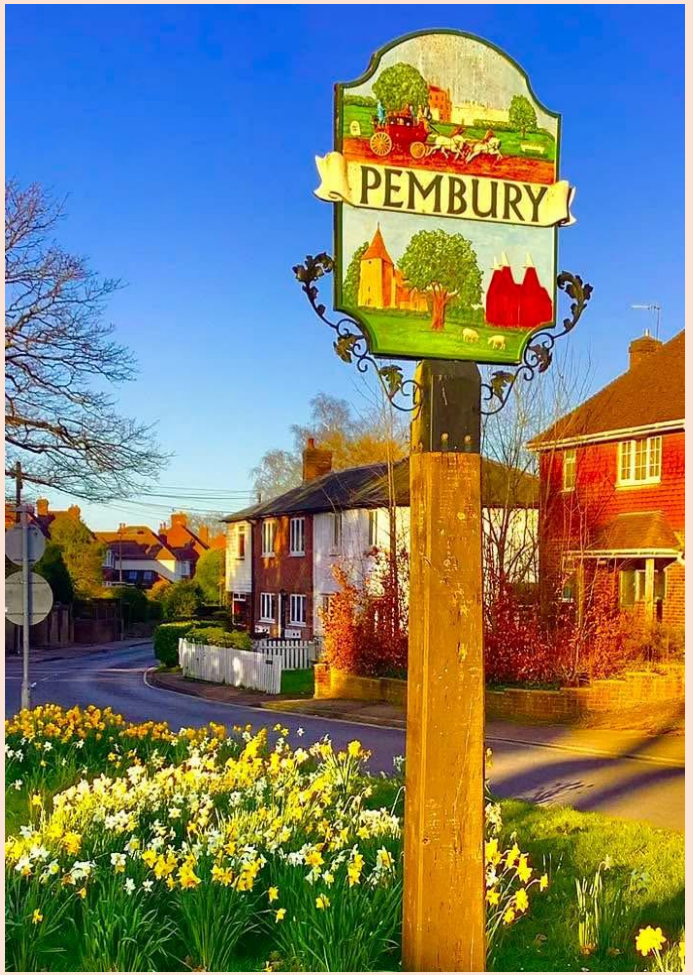
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Welcome

We are delighted that you are taking an interest in our parish and we pray that our profile will give you a real sense of who we are and also help you discern your own calling.

We hope you will find much in this profile to interest you and please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like any further information.



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Message from Archdeacon Nick Cornell

Pembury offers a wonderful opportunity for the right priest to minister to two established congregations who are looking to reach more deeply into their community. Pembury is a large village in the High Weald, just outside Tunbridge Wells, and a sought after place to live, with good links to Tunbridge Wells and the wider South East. It has kept a real community feel, and both the Tunbridge Wells Hospital and the Hospice in the Weald sit within the parish.

Inclusivity is at the heart of life within the two congregations, and the parish is a member of Inclusive Church. Between the two churches, a Norman church on the edge of the village and a Victorian church at its centre, there is a breadth of worship. It ranges from the more formal BCP services to a more modern, yet still liturgically ordered, Eucharistic tradition.

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This single parish is well supported by two retired priests, two Licensed Lay Ministers and a committed lay team. They are now looking for a priest who can build on their strong worship and lively church community, and be a visible presence in the village. There is real work to do: holding two distinct congregations together, growing work among teenagers from a small base, and deepening links with the local primary school.

The parish also has a very active patron, Christ Church, Oxford, which has been a generous supporter of the parish and its clergy.

Could this be you? I hope the pages that follow help you to discern that, and I would be very glad to talk with you.

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Overview

We are a single parish with two churches, both dedicated to St. Peter, with many opportunities for ministry.

The Parish Church, known as "the Old Church", built in the early Norman period and Grade 1 listed, is set in a rural location.



The Upper Church, built in 1847 and Grade 2* listed, is set in the centre of the village.



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Who we are

- We are an inclusive, eucharistically-based church. We uphold a liberal approach to theology, open to the insights of Biblical scholarship and engagement with current issues. We are a member of the Inclusive Church Network.
- Our ethos is one of central churchmanship with attention to the dignified conduct of liturgy (Common Worship at the Upper Church, and the Book of Common Prayer along with Common Worship at the Old Church). The Old Church is a member of the Prayer Book Society.
- St. Peter, Pembury promotes a safe and healthy culture within our church community. Our congregation is friendly, relaxed and welcoming; our church family spans the generations.



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Our Aims

- To continue the work of Jesus in making the Gospel known in our community and beyond and working for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God.
- To be welcoming, hospitable and inclusive.
- To provide regular services in our two churches that are relevant, encouraging and inspirational.
- To provide opportunities for all ages to explore the Christian faith and Christian spirituality.
- To minister to the community through baptisms, weddings and funerals, and through pastoral care.
- To support mission partners in the UK and abroad.



The Future

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Key areas of focus

Developing ministry amongst teenagers:
Growing and sustaining a vibrant ministry with teenagers that supports them in their faith journey, helps them feel welcomed and valued within the church, and encourages their active participation in the life and mission of the parish.

Improving communication through our website and social media:
Working to enhance the church's website and social media presence to communicate more effectively with the congregation and wider community, sharing information clearly, promoting events, and reflecting the life and values of the parish.

Strengthening fellowship within the congregation and beyond:
Creating and developing opportunities for fellowship that bring people of all ages together, deepen relationships, encourage mutual support, and nurture a strong sense of belonging within the church community.

Person Profile

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Who we are looking for

We are seeking an outward community focused Vicar who:

- will support our values of being a broad, liberal, liturgical and inclusive church;
- has a sensitivity in leading worship, being largely eucharistically-based (both Common Worship and Book of Common Prayer), but also including our monthly All Together Worship service at the Upper Church and our monthly service of Matins at the Old Church;
- takes a delight in preaching, following the 3-year Revised Common Lectionary;
- is willing to consider and include music from across the centuries in worship;
- has a pastoral heart, making it a priority to visit parishioners;
- is active in nurturing deeper discipleship through homegroups and study courses;
- will seek to develop the church's ministry among children and young people;
- actively works to build up fellowship within the church family;

- encourages lay participation in all aspects of church life;
- is a confident and democratic leader, chairing the church committees with clarity and vision;
- embeds the values of safeguarding in all areas of church life;
- has an understanding for village-based ministry, maintaining an active presence in the life of the wider community;
- will affirm the congregation's willingness to participate in outreach activities;
- will develop and foster strong links with Pembury Primary School;
- maintains links with our two residential care homes, the hospice and the hospital;
- will work alongside other organisations such as the Parish Council, the Pembury Society, and the Scout and Guide movements;
- upholds the close links between the parish and Kent College (local independent school);
- is supportive of the warm ecumenical relations that exist in the village;
- gives due attention to effective communication, including our website and social media.

Church Information

Worship and Prayer

The Sunday morning service pattern is as follows:

9.30am	Holy Communion (Common Worship) at the Upper Church.
	On the fourth Sunday of each month All Together Worship is held.
	These services are also livestreamed.
11.30am	Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer) on the 1st, 3rd & 5th Sundays of the month, Matins on the 2nd, and Holy Communion (Common Worship) on the 4th at the Parish (Old) Church.

The worship is supported by a dedicated team of organists, vergers, servers, sidespeople and providers of refreshments.

Vestments are traditionally worn at both the Upper and Old Churches; cassock alb, stole and chasuble at all celebrations of the Eucharist, and choir habit for non-Eucharistic services.

Music at St Peter's forms an important part of the worship in both churches. The primary hymn book used is "Ancient and Modern", we also use our AV system to good effect for other hymns/songs.

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A midweek service of Holy Communion is held each Wednesday at the Upper Church at 10 am, followed by refreshments at 10.45 am, known as "Coffee Stop".

Morning Prayer is held every day via Zoom at 9.15 am, with the exception of Sunday.

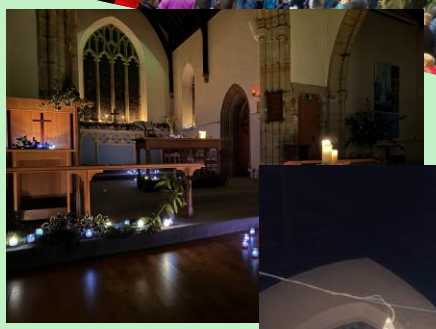
A monthly "Down Memory Lane" Service is held in church aimed at those living with memory loss and their care givers.

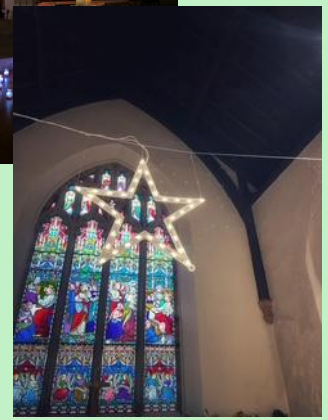
Monthly services are conducted at the two local care homes: at Cornford House and at Hazeldene House.

Special services are held for the various seasons of the Church's calendar, including Mothering Sunday, Holy Week and Easter, St. Peter's Day, Harvest, Remembrance, Advent and Christmas. The Remembrance Sunday Service at the War Memorial includes significant involvement of the Scouts and Guides.









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Children

Junior Church is held every Sunday as part of the 9.30 am Sunday morning service at the Upper Church, starting after the welcome and first hymn, with the children returning back to the service at the administration of communion.

They show a summary of what they have been learning and the craft they have been making at the time of the notices before the final hymn.

Dating back to 2007, the parish has permission to administer communion before Confirmation.



Ministry Team

The Vicar is assisted in the conduct of Sunday services and in preaching by two retired priests with Permission to Officiate and by two Licensed Lay Ministers.

The authorised ministry team meets on a termly basis to discuss the planning of Sunday worship and other matters.

Home communions are taken by a small team to those who by reason of age or infirmity are unable to attend church.

We benefit from supportive lay participation in leadership and worship. We also have a trained and commissioned Anna Chaplain and an Anna Friend.



Administration



The Parochial Church Council (PCC) meets six times a year, with meetings of the Finance and Standing Committee (FSC) in between.

The two Churchwardens meet regularly with the Vicar to talk through aspects of parish life.

The Vestry at the Upper Church is equipped with a computer and photocopier/printer.

Paddock Wood Deanery



Paddock Wood Deanery comprises largely rural parishes to the north and east of Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells. The Deanery Chapter meets every 6 to 8 weeks and is a supportive fellowship for the clergy.

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Church and Community

We are a friendly and welcoming church family. We have strong links with the local community, participating in various village events.



A weekly Coffee Stop takes place in the church on Wednesday mornings after the midweek communion service and is attended by around 30 people.

The church has hosted a number of events in the past such as concerts, dances and harvest suppers which have always proved to be popular.



The "Out and About Club" organises three coach outings a year for residents in the village who are either on their own or who cannot get out and about because of lack of mobility or transport. There are over 50 residents who regularly attend our outings, most of which are oversubscribed.

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The Pembury Society uses the Upper Church twice a year for events.

The Hospice Choir uses the Upper Church once a fortnight for their rehearsals.

The Charles Amherst Almshouses opposite the Upper Church are 300 years old and listed. They consist of a row of six cottages for those who are over 60 years of age and in need. The Almshouses and residents are looked after by a panel of 5 trustees, one of whom is the vicar. The trustees meet on average 4 times a year.

Cornford House and Hazeldene Care Home are residential care homes and we take monthly services in each.

Half a mile from the village centre is Aspens. This is a charity which supports adults with learning disabilities. Some residents are regular worshippers at the Upper Church.

Kent College, the local independent Methodist School, fosters a close relationship with the parish and has its own chaplain.

Occasional (termly) assemblies are taken at Pembury Primary School.

The Hospice in the Weald and the Tunbridge Wells Hospital at Pembury are supported by all the churches in the village and have their own chaplaincy teams.

Church members support the local foodbank.

St Peter's enjoys good relationships with Pembury Baptist Church and St. Anselm's Catholic Church.

We have an active link with the Parish of St. Stephen, Maziwa, in the Diocese of Kondoa in Tanzania.



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Buildings

The Parish Church (known locally as "the Old Church") is in the countryside on the edge of the village and dates from 1147 with additions made in 1337 and subsequent centuries. It is the oldest building in the village.



It is particularly attractive for weddings due to its picturesque location and the heritage of the building. It is also regularly used by Kent College due to its proximity to the school.



The Old Church is maintained and repaired through the work and fundraising of the Friends of Pembury Parish Church, and so is largely self-financing. The churchyard at the Old Church is closed and the upkeep is the responsibility of the Parish Council.

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Buildings





The Upper Church is in the centre of the village and was built in 1847. Behind the Upper Church there is a burial ground belonging to, and managed by, Pembury Parish Council.



The Upper Church was substantially reordered in 1991 with all the pews being replaced with chairs, and a digital organ replacing the pipe organ.

Three rooms were created for Junior Church activities during services and also for use as meeting rooms and other activities at different times.



There is also a kitchen, a toilet and a library. The flexible space allows the church to be used for varying styles of worship and social activities.

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The fabric of the churches is mainly in good order. Both churches have benefitted from a recent upgrade to their AV systems.

In the Upper Church this has also included the introduction of screens and projection facilities. These are put to good use in the monthly All Together Worship services, and also for talks and lectures.

In the Old Church there has also been a recent significant upgrade to the lighting system, greatly enhancing the interior lighting of the church.

Planning permission has expired for earlier plans for a community hall addition to the Upper Church.



Vicarage

The Vicarage is at 4 Hastings Road (TN2 4PD), a short walk from the Upper Church and the village green.

It is a comfortable detached house built in 1981. There are two reception rooms, a kitchen, a utility room, a cloakroom, and the vicarage study/office on the ground floor. Upstairs there are four double bedrooms, a bathroom and a separate toilet with a wash basin.

It has an attached garage with room for three cars to be parked on the drive, and a spacious garden.





Finances

Full details of the parish's finances may be viewed in the Annual Report. The PCC and FSC work hard to try to maintain a balanced budget. We also support three mission-link agencies through monthly retiring collections: the Parish of St. Stephen, Maziwa; the Pilsdon at Malling Community; the Rochester Diocesan Community Engagement and Social Action Team.

The patron of the living of St. Peter's, Pembury is Christ Church, Oxford. Christ Church takes an active and continuing interest in the Benefices in which it holds patronage and is in the happy position of being able to support incumbents beyond the appointment process through the revenues of the Dr South Trust, with grants for study, administration and holidays, a biennial conference for incumbents held at Christ Church, and an invitation to parishioners every two years for a service and dinner in Oxford.

Clerical Vacancy

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Clerical Vacancy



During this time, all of our regular Sunday / Mid Week Services have been covered by two retired priests with Permission to Officiate and by two Licensed Lay Ministers who are members of our congregation.

We have been blessed to have a thriving schedule of Occasional Offices, including 3 Weddings, 9 Baptisms and 6 Funerals to date.

Our Deputy Warden has said "It will not come easy….., but it should be stated that there has been a dedicated response by members of the PCC and in particular, a magnificent response by a select hard core who have managed to keep the Church functioning extremely well and all of the Occasional Offices have been managed seamlessly".

Pembury

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Pembury in brief

Pembury is a large village situated three miles from Tunbridge Wells within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The surrounding Kent Countryside features woodlands (including a designated RSPB site), meadows, fruit farms, hops and apple orchards.

For many centuries, the village comprised a collection of small farming hamlets. From the 1600s the centre of population began to coalesce along the Hastings Road and the Upper Green area.

The village was extensively built up in the 1960s and 1970s with several housing estates, and with in-filling since, as well as some earlier council housing estates. In the Local Plan there are also proposals for some further housing development.



The population is just over 6,000. Pembury has a Primary School and also Kent College which is a Methodist foundation, providing private education for pupils aged 3-18. In addition to the Anglican Parish, there is a Baptist Church and a Catholic Church.

The upper area of the village is centred around a village green, which hosts our village Christmas Tree and annual open air carol service.

Along the High Street there is a post office, the village stores, Tesco and various services including a dentist, hairdressers, solicitors, vet, pharmacy, estate agents, chiropodist, Chinese and Indian take-away restaurants and three popular pubs. There is also a GP practice, a library, 2 hotels and a garden centre.





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Pembury has nurseries, childminders and two schools serving the village, a local primary and an independent day/boarding school. Neighbouring towns, Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge, have a good selection of schools including a number of grammar and Church of England schools.



The village also boasts a large recreation ground with a multi-purpose modern pavilion, a bowling green and tennis courts. There is also a cricket club and a second recreation ground on the edge of the village.



Pembury maintains a strong sense of village identity, with a thriving WI, U3A and the Scout and Guide Movement.

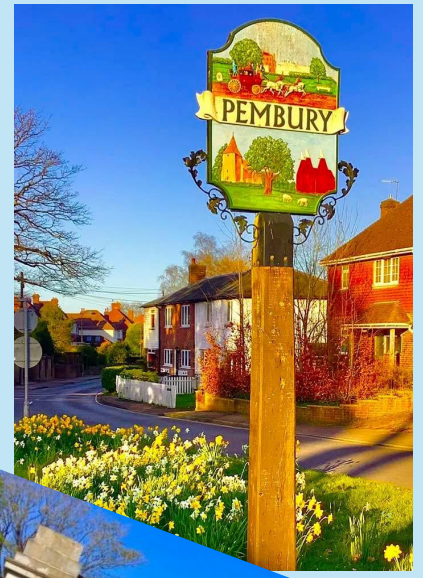
The Tunbridge Wells Hospital at Pembury, which lies about half a mile from the centre, has been substantially redeveloped to become the main hospital for the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust. The Hospice in the Weald opened in 1998.

The A21 southern by-pass and the A228 northern by-pass preserve the quieter nature of residential roads within the village.

It has easy access to the M25, Maidstone and the M20. London is 45 minutes by train from Tonbridge or Paddock Wood stations, each of which are five miles away.

Pembury has excellent transport links and residents find employment in Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge, and a wide radius of Kent and Sussex. Some also commute to London.

Residents have easy access via road and rail to London, the coast and the continent, alongside ready access to airports.





Thank you and contact details

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