

THE BENEFICE OF THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD, BOROUGH GREEN



PARISH PROFILE 2026

WELCOME

Borough Green is a large village characterised by a vibrant and active community, good transport connections, and a growing population, all set within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). We are thrilled by your interest in our benefice, and this profile aims to offer insight into our church community. We hope it aids you in discerning whether God is calling you to guide us on our journey of faith and mission.

In seeking a new priest-in-charge, we hope to find someone who embodies several key characteristics. We desire a person who is committed to God, grounded in prayer and scripture, who can share these insights with us in an accessible manner. This individual would lead and equip us in discipleship and outreach.

We are looking for a compassionate leader, someone who is empathetic and can communicate sensitively with both our congregation and the wider community. An enthusiasm for church growth and a passion for sharing the Christian faith is essential.

Collaboration is vital; therefore, we seek a 'people person' who can work alongside laypeople and church officers, nurturing and challenging members of our congregation to develop their gifts and ministries. A successful candidate will also engage effectively with young people and local schools.

We hope for a priest who will support church social gatherings and fundraising events, and help us further explore diverse opportunities for worship and musical styles.

As Borough Green continues to evolve with new housing developments, we need someone ready to embrace both the challenges and opportunities that come with this growth. We hope our new priest can enjoy ministry with energy, enthusiasm, and a sense of humour while also taking necessary time off.

Our vision reflects the growing size and diversity of our community. We aspire to reach out to all generations while meeting the needs of our congregation. Our goal is to be a vibrant, flourishing, and outward-looking church that welcomes people of all ages and churchmanship. We aim to engage effectively in outreach, grow our church, and deepen our faith with the guidance of our new incumbent.

We eagerly anticipate the future!



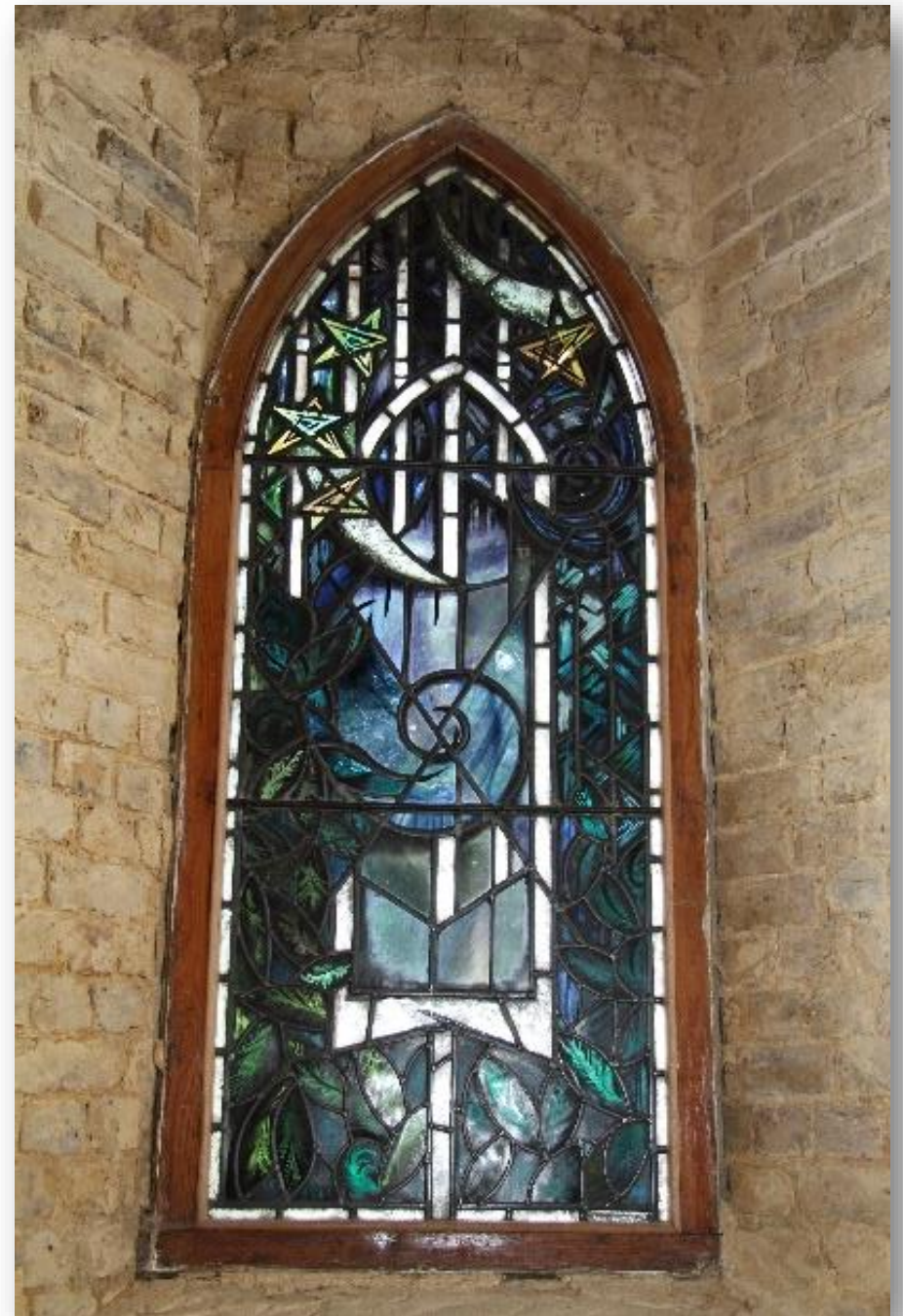
WITH GOD'S HELP, COULD YOU BE OUR PRIEST? 'IS IT I LORD?'

Naturally, we want our next priest to be someone who walks closely with God, is excited by the message of the gospel, loves and cares for each member of their flock, and nurtures everyone's faith.

But could you also:

- Set out and take forward a vision that will enthuse each member of our congregation
- Reinvigorate our work with children, youth and younger adults, so that the witness of the Good Shepherd will continue into future generations
- Inspire and lead our mission into the village of Borough Green taking full advantage of the opportunities for community engagement and evangelism offered in the heart of the community
- As priest, take the gospel into the schools, the working community, the care home and retirement home and be respected for your contribution to the local community
- Guide us into an ever closer relationship, and ultimately creation of a united benefice, with our friends in the neighbouring parish of St Mary the Virgin, Platt

If you sense that God might be calling you to us, read on.



WHAT WE CAN OFFER A NEW PRIEST

- **A Warm and Welcoming Community:** The church family is excited to welcome a new priest and looks forward to collaborative growth
- **Supportive Leadership:** A dedicated Parochial Church Council (PCC) works hard to sustain the church and support the incumbent
- **Strong Ministry Team:** The church benefits from enthusiastic members who assist with various duties, and a ministry team that includes a lay minister, a lay minister in training and a prayer ministry team
- **Flexible and Accessible Building:** The attractive, well-maintained church building and an available annexe are open daily for use by the community and local groups
- **Diverse Worship Styles:** The church community would like to continue to explore a greater variety of worship styles
- **Opportunities for Outreach:** Situated within a rapidly growing village, there are existing established links with local organisations and numerous opportunities for further mission and growth
- **Children's Ministry:** A Children's Church is already in place with a committed team eager for growth

- **Help with Admin:** We are in the process of engaging the services of a part-time administrator to be shared with St Mary's Platt
- **Future Vision:** The church community welcomes the chance to extend its outreach particularly to schools, youth and young families in the area
- **Convenient Housing:** The parsonage is located within a short walking distance of the church in the village centre



WHO ARE WE?

We are an inclusive church committed to Bible-based worship and mission, wanting to share our love for Jesus with local people. Sadly, our congregation does not reflect the totality of our local community which consists of all ages, sexualities, genders, and people of all socioeconomic groups. Our challenges are to appeal to younger people, more families, introduce our foodbank clients to the love of God as well as the professional commuters.

Currently, our services are mainly traditional communion services, but we are keen to continue and expand fresh expressions of worship and build on our breakfast church, with the ideas and experiences of a new priest.

Although we have experienced a decline in attendance over the last few years, the church has a regular attendance of 30-40 people in Sunday services, increasing at Easter and other festivals when the church is filled with music and praise.

Despite having a primary school within the benefice and a nearby secondary school, numbers of young people attending services is small with a noticeable gap in the teenage years, which we would like to fill. The village supports multiple children's activities including scouting and guiding groups, a dance school and a junior football

club which could potentially lead the right person to develop a sports ministry in some form.

We have an informal cluster ministry with our three neighbouring parishes of St Mary's Platt, Ightham and Wrotham. The group has united services occasionally, such as Ash Wednesday and 5th Sundays, when we assemble our shared wooden cross. In the future we are planning to have a much closer union with our friends at St Mary's Platt.



Smaller numbers attending services have not diminished our activities in the local community with regular events; a toddler group, games and film afternoons, and a weekly open house coffee morning, all of which are generally well attended but have room for growth and development.

We hold regular fundraising activities with supper quizzes, craft fairs and wreath making, being popular.



LOCATION AND PARISH

The Church of the Good Shepherd is located in the village of Borough Green in West Kent which offers a balance of rural charm and modern convenience.

We are located just 30 miles southeast of Central London, with easy access to the rest of Kent via the M20 and further afield on the M26. Borough Green and Wrotham railway station provides a straightforward train service to London Victoria and London Bridge taking only 45 minutes, or Ashford, Canterbury and the coast travelling in the other direction. There are also bus services to neighbouring towns like Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Maidstone.

The village fosters a close-knit community and, with a population of around 4,700, Borough Green is the smallest parish in Kent by area, yet it boasts the highest population density in the Tonbridge and Malling Borough, offering a vibrant atmosphere. It acts as a hub for several neighbouring villages with its local amenities including a medical centre, shops, restaurants / takeaways, hairdressers and funeral directors.

The surrounding countryside invites exploration, featuring a mix of farmland and woodland, alongside a network of scenic footpaths, perfect for leisurely walks or bike rides.

Borough Green offers a safe, welcoming environment with excellent schools, community facilities and travel connectivity, making it a good place to live.

We are part of the Shoreham Deanery part of the Archdeaconry of Tonbridge, in the Diocese of Rochester.



Village views



IN CONCLUSION - OUR PROMISE TO YOU

Thank you for reading this Profile. We hope that you have been stimulated and excited by it and we pray that you will know God's guidance as you consider whether you can rise to the challenges of being our priest, but also with a view to creating a united benefice of Borough Green and St Mary's Platt. We recognise that this is not easy as you bring together two similar but until now, separate parishes. We also recognise that its challenges can only be successfully addressed through a partnership between priest and congregations, together seeking and taking forward God's intentions for the churches and their roles in the local communities. So, as the people of the Church of the Good Shepherd, we pledge that we will give you love, prayer and support, that under your leadership, we will all grow in Christ and, together, may serve our church communities and the parishes.



Our church family are waiting to meet you

Appendices

1: Worship

2: Outreach

3: Key People

4: Facts & Figures

5: Buildings

6: Village Life

7: Working towards a joint
benefice



In January 2026, we celebrated our 120th anniversary with a special service and bring & share lunch.

1. WORSHIP

We are of 'central' churchmanship. The main service is the 10am Parish Eucharist, based on Common Worship. Our hymn book is the 2013 edition of 'Ancient and Modern'. We have an organ, but currently no organist so services are accompanied by backing tracks played over the sound system.

Currently, we usually follow the readings set in the Common Worship lectionary, but this is sometimes varied, particularly for all age and breakfast services. Members of the congregation help with readings and intercessions.

Our current month of worship at the Good Shepherd:

SUNDAY

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1 st Sunday 10am | All age communion |
| 2 nd Sunday 10am | Holy Communion & Children's Church meet in the annexe, then join the congregation during communion to share their experiences. |
| 3 rd Sunday 9am
10.30am | Breakfast Church
Holy Communion |
| 4 th Sunday 10am | Holy Communion & Children's Church |

Refreshments in the annexe after the 10 o'clock service provide a welcome opportunity to greet newcomers and visitors, as well as time to catch up with friends and celebrate special birthdays and anniversaries.



The annexe



Some of our Children's Church members

2. OUTREACH

The church building hosts several outreaching activities.

MONDAY

Food Bank distributes food to needy local families. Run entirely by a team of volunteers most of whom are from the surrounding community.

Toddler Time fortnightly for pre-schoolers and their carers.

Games Afternoon fortnightly for members of the community; a session of board games with tea and chat.

TUESDAY is a quiet day with no regular activities.

WEDNESDAY

Film Afternoon monthly in the Church between October and April, showing popular films, free of charge, to the community.

THURSDAY

Rhythm of Life a house group is held fortnightly at the home of one of the churchwardens.

PCC Meeting is held monthly in the annexe.

FRIDAY is a quiet day with no regular activities.

SATURDAY

Garden Working Party meet monthly to maintain the gardens and grounds.

Open House a weekly, warm space morning with free refreshments.



The Voice

Our monthly parish magazine 'The Voice', promotes all kinds of community activities and is delivered free of charge to over 1900 homes.

The church maintains a website <https://cogsonline.co.uk/> and has a Facebook page which are used to inform a wider audience of church activities. The local ePinboard is also used for this purpose.

An 'Occasional Choir' is occasionally brought together from members of the congregation, as well as neighbouring churches and the local community, for special events.

3. KEY MEMBERS OF OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our two Churchwardens, Carole and Julie, ensure services run smoothly with the help of sides people.

Carole is also our Safeguarding Lead supported by Lynne who is our Lead Recruiter.

Our Licensed Lay Minister, Elaine, came out of retirement to support the church during interregnum. She runs a games afternoon for outreach, and occasionally leads and preaches on Sundays. In addition, she is licensed in funeral ministry and undertakes the burial of ashes in our Garden of Remembrance.

The Licensed Lay Minister in training, Anke, carries out pastoral visits and home communions, as well as a monthly service at our local care home, Westbank.

Three members of our congregation have completed Rochester Diocese's Speaking God's Word course, which enables them to preach and lead home groups under the guidance of the priest.

There is a Prayer Ministry team of six trained members.

Julia, Isabel and Thea are our Children's Church leaders.

Mark is our Treasurer, Thea our PCC Secretary and Ian our Food Bank Leader.

We have a dedicated PCC who meet regularly in person and get together socially at least once a year.

A well-established home group meets fortnightly, led by Carole and Ian.



Julie & Carole



Elaine

4. FIGURES & FINANCE

Parish Statistics	
Residents (2021 census)	4750
Number on electoral roll (2025)	52
Baptisms (2024)	3
Weddings (2024)	3
Funerals (2024)	2
Burial of ashes (2024)	5

Financial Year 2025	
Overall Income	£69,067
Overall Expenditure	£57,349
Parish Offer Paid	£36,600

In addition to our Food Bank, our charity away giving is important to us and each year we support two or three nominated charities. We also collect and donate shoe boxes to Eastern Europe.



5. BUILDINGS

The foundation stone for the Church of the Good Shepherd (COGS) was laid in January 1906 and the church consecrated in July 1906.

The church is traditionally built of brick with a tiled roof, with local Kentish rag stone providing an architectural adornment. The inside of the church has been reordered over the years, with the chancel furniture being easily moveable when required. The nave chairs allow for various configurations as services or community activities demand. The vestry has also had refurbishment.

The highlights of the church include its modern stained glass windows. The east end has a depiction of the Transfiguration designed by the artist Patrick Reyntiens, and in the Lady Chapel, a 1994 addition, by the local artist Nicola Kantorowicz.

The church annexe was built by parishioners and members of the congregation in 1991 and is a valuable asset to the church, providing kitchen and toilet facilities, as well as being a popular meeting facility.

In the church grounds is the beautiful and tranquil Garden of Remembrance, used for the burial of ashes and remembrance plaques.

Our most recent project has been to build a custom-made store for the Foodbank in the church. This was dedicated by Bishop Simon of Tonbridge back in October 2025.



The vicarage is a short walk from the church. It offers a detached four-bedroom house with three reception rooms. A garage lies to the front of the property and a good-sized garden to the rear.



The Parish Hall hosts a day time preschool and evening classes, is overseen by a separate management committee and is just a short walk from the church.



6. VILLAGE LIFE – SCHOOLS

Borough Green Primary School (Foundation School) is in the heart of the community and has 265 pupils. Its most recent Ofsted report (March 2024) rated it 'Good' in all areas.

The school runs an onsite day nursery (Steps to School), as well as a sessional pre-school, a before and after school and holiday childcare club and a Children's Centre.

The Parish Hall hosts Bright Start pre-school during term time.

Wrotham School (Academy) is situated to the north of the village and is a non-selective secondary school, rated 'Good' by Ofsted (November 2024). Approximately half of the children from Borough Green Primary School move to Wrotham School with the rest attending either non selective schools or selective single sex schools in the surrounding areas. There are also a number of independent schools within the area.

Grange Park School is also situated in the north of the village and provides specialist provision for children and young people aged between 11 and 19 with an Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC).



Borough Green Primary School

www.brightstartbg.co.uk

www.stepstoschooldaynursery.co.uk/

www.bgpschool.kent.sch.uk

www.wrothamschool.com

www.grange-park-school-kent.co.uk

6. VILLAGE LIFE - ORGANISATIONS

The Parish Hall, Village Hall, Potters Mede Sportsground and Recreation Ground are well utilised, and provide space for parties and events, as well as many clubs and societies including an active U3A group, Zumba fitness classes, Yoga, Slimming World, Badminton, Dance School, Martial Arts and Borough Green & Platt Players dramatic group, to name but a few. Borough Green junior football club utilises the 4G pitches at Wrotham School, as well as the pitches at Potters Mede and the Recreation Ground.

The joint scouting and guiding association groups are active, and along with other uniformed organisations, annually attend the Remembrance Day service in the church.

A popular bowls club is situated adjacent to the south side of the Recreational Ground and plays friendly and competitive ladies', men's and mixed games with other local clubs.

There are 3 churches in the village including the Church of the Good Shepherd; St. Joseph's (Roman Catholic) and Borough Green Baptist Church.



Village views



7. WORKING TOWARDS A JOINT BENEFICE

St Mary's in Platt is only one mile by road from the Church of the Good Shepherd in Borough Green, and with residential housing stretching along the A25 between them, there is a recognised overlap of the boundary between the two villages.

Currently, we are two similar, but until now, separate parishes. Going forward, we are seeking to become a joint benefice. With the vision and help of a new priest we are hoping to develop the connections which already exist between us, and further grow our relationship in order to nurture our church families and communities. We understand that we will need to learn to support each other, as well as adapt and make compromises, when sharing one priest.

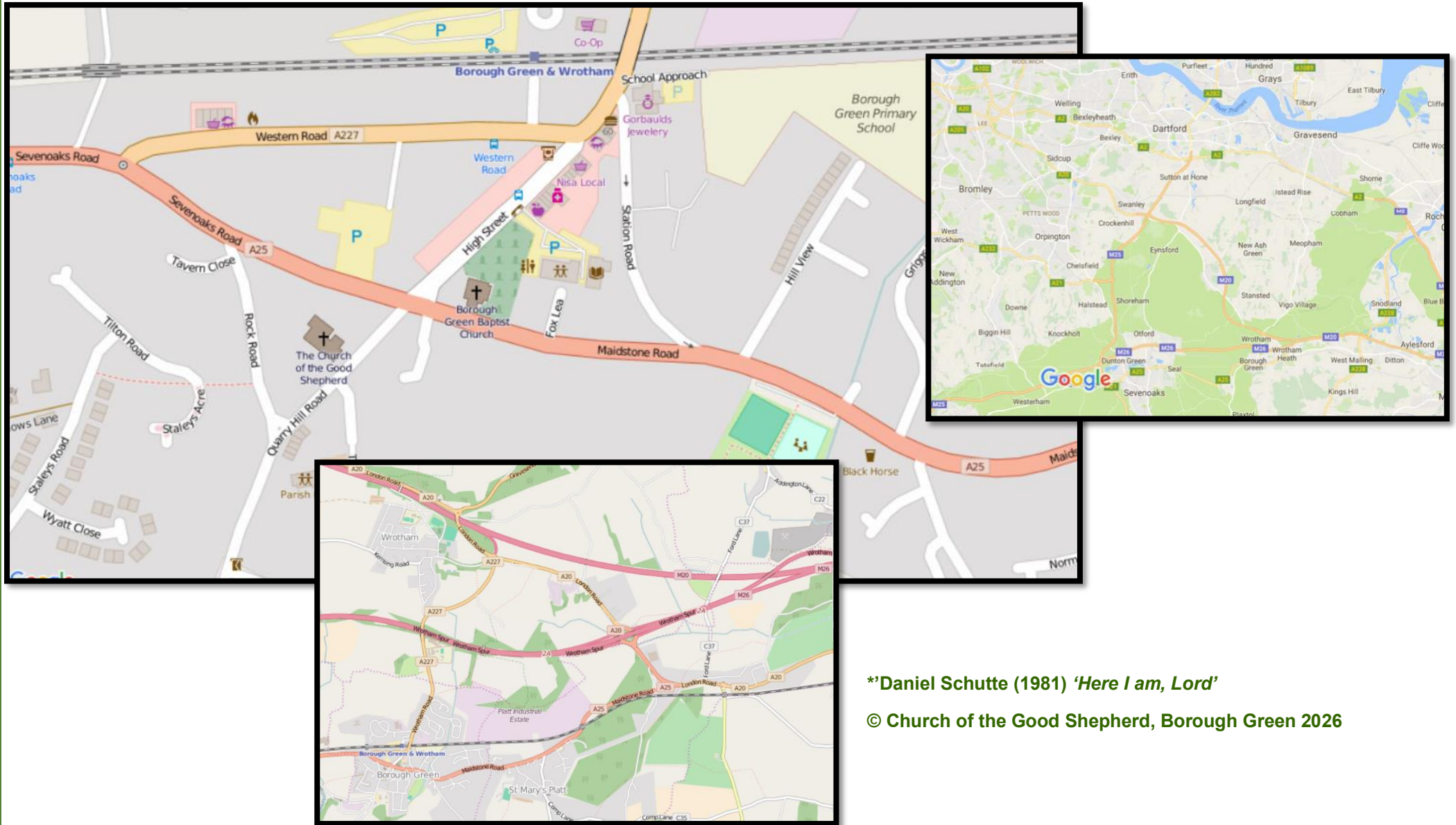
In a bid to move towards sharing our ministry until we meet our new priest, we are planning to share activities such as Lent groups, confirmation classes and joint services for our young people. We also intend to form a joint standing committee to enable planning and decisions to be facilitated. We have appointed a part-time administrator whose hours are shared equally between our two parishes. They provide essential support with day-to-day administration and will continue to work closely with the new incumbent.

We will assist our new incumbent in every way we can to facilitate the creation of the joint benefice. We will also respect the need for uninterrupted days off and annual leave.

Both parishes will work to support and nurture our incumbent, ensuring that they are also given the time they need for their own spiritual and professional development.



'I WILL GO LORD, IF YOU LEAD ME'*



*Daniel Schutte (1981) *'Here I am, Lord'*

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