

**Team Vicar
Christ Church, Colliers Wood
within Merton Priory Team Ministry**

2026

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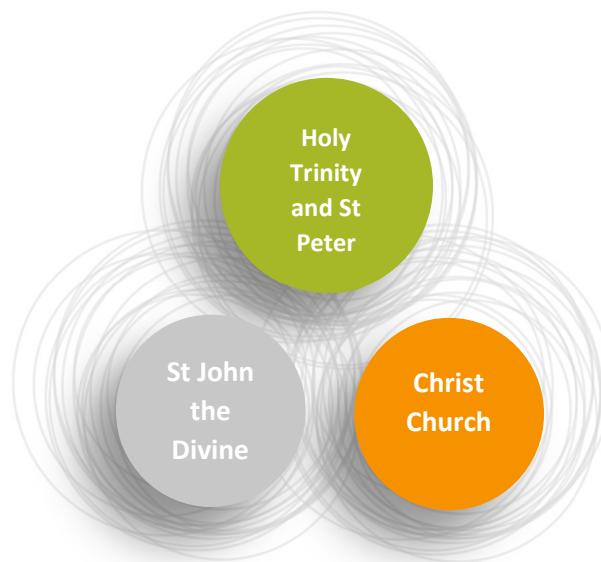
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MERTON PRIORY TEAM MINISTRY

The Merton Priory Team Ministry was formed in 2009 by the coming together of Holy Trinity & St Peter, South Wimbledon with St John the Divine, Merton and Christ Church, Colliers Wood, which two latter parishes had previously shared a vicar. Each church has a District Church Council including oversight of day-to-day running and finances with Merton Priory Parochial Church Council sitting above as the overarching legal body. Our constitution as a relatively small team with a Team Rector and Team Vicar has meant, while each church has maintained its distinctive identity and loyal membership, we are able to work very closely in many areas. We could be described broadly as within a Liberal Catholic Anglican tradition, although many would feel no need to attach any label.

The Team Rector (Revd Mark Eminson), based at Holy Trinity, has been in post since 2019 and is also Chair of the Kingston Racial Justice Group, Area Dean of Merton and Ex-Officio governor at our two church schools of The Priory and Holy Trinity. We are also blessed with a title curate (Revd Mary Kilikidi), who was ordained deacon in 2025 and is due to be ordained priest in 2026, God-willing; we have had a good record of being a training parish. Therefore, we do indeed work closely as we pray the Daily Office together, have weekly staff meetings and occasional away days. Christian initiation and discipleship such as first communion and confirmation preparation and Lent and Bible Study Groups, are also conducted team-wide and we have regular Team services throughout the year including for Holy Week. We also combine in our looking outwards, such as through membership of Merton Citizens and in our Eco-Church and Racial Justice work. All three churches have adopted the Inclusive Church statement.

Holy Trinity has a relatively large congregation, bolstered by two church primary schools being situated in its district, hence it welcomes a lot of families. The church building also has much community use. St John's has a small but faithful congregation, although has good links with the primary school next door and is well-used by Merton Music Foundation and for occasional large events such as Parish Ale and the annual Pantomime.



Around 2021-2022, we felt called in our Mission Action Planning process to have a Team MAP focussing together on building up the congregation of St John's and serving the community on High Path, an estate undergoing regeneration right on the doorstep of the church (see MAP below). This has borne some fruit in small growth at St John's and projects on the estate such as a toddler group.

The previous Team Vicar was equally responsible for Christ Church and St John's, but at this stage in our common life we feel Christ Church would benefit from its own dedicated vicar to build on strong congregational foundations, extend community links in Colliers Wood and encourage further growth. St John's would come under the oversight of the Team Rector at Holy Trinity, although all of us together would continue to explore options for new life at St John's and on High Path estate.

The vision of our parish is expressed in our Mission Statement, originally formulated in 2011, and reaffirmed as part of our Mission Action Planning in 2021-22:

'In Merton Priory Team Ministry we aim to be a community:

Faithful to God

Sharing with those in need

Caring for one another

What God is calling our church to do and become in the next three to five years

To show God's love to everyone in our parish

For all three churches to be growing, thereby able to better serve our communities

With an especial focus for all three churches to enable growth at St John's and an increased presence on High Path.

3-5

Year Vision



Mission Priority One

Building congregation of St John's from within the Team

Action Goals for 3 – 5 years

1. Form leadership team to oversee Priority 1
2. Church graft from say HT to SJD
3. Early Service/Messy Church at SJD
4. Different time and/or style of service
5. All of the above grounded in prayer



Mission Priority Two

Serving the community at High Path

Action Goals for 3 – 5 years

1. Form leadership team to oversee Priority 2
2. Audit of what the community wants
3. Working with partners on the estate
4. Increasing church/hall use for community
5. All of the above grounded in prayer



Mission Priority Three

Ministry to young people, including schools

Action Goals for 3 – 5 years

1. Form leadership team to oversee Priority 3
2. Developing links with Merton Abbey/Harris
3. Bell-ringing for teenagers
4. The answer is table-tennis!
5. All of the above grounded in prayer

Quotes

What are the aspects of Christ Church life you most appreciate?

I cannot fault Christ Church, all were very welcoming to me when I joined. I really like the traditional worship, and I like the fact that after the service we are encouraged to meet together for coffee and chat and the vicar speaks with us and gets to know us. I also really like the friendliness of the whole congregation, and we love the worship at Christ Church and learning.

The friendliness, the ability of so many ex-churchwardens to get on with any job that needs doing; the lack of hierarchy in the church; the coffee and chat after the service, the courage of injured members to carry on.

Christ Church is pretty much perfect, it is a great church and the focus of worship and how it affects our life through prayer and traditional worship and holy communion is very important. The Sunday worship is lovely and could not be better.

Being accepting of people of other nationalities, e.g. refugees and asylum seekers; being pastoral, visiting, knowing people's names, problems.



NEW TEAM VICAR PERSON SPECIFICATION

Role

Our Team Vicar will carry the responsibility for Christ Church within Merton Priory Team Ministry and will also share in team-wide services and initiatives in collaboration with the Team Rector, Curate and other members of the parish.

Team Player

Our new Team Vicar will be actively supportive of collaborative ministry, and will work enthusiastically with the Team Rector and other members of the team in all aspects of parish life, and enjoy working across the team ministry. S/he will also encourage the congregation to realise their God-given gifts for the mission of the church, and work to nurture vocations to particular ministries within the life of the church.

The Community

We are seeking a Team Vicar who has a heart for community mission. S/he will seek to increase the profile of the church in the local community, building pastoral relationships widely with people and institutions, for instance with schools and community associations. S/he will be keen to engage with statutory and voluntary organisations around matters of social policy, for example in relating to schools/residents, exploring ecumenical relationships with the local Catholic Church and Oasis Church next door.

Church Tradition and Theological Outlook

Our Team Vicar will lead a Christ-centred life and will communicate God's message by word and example. A commitment to the flourishing inclusivity of the Merton Priory Team whereby people of differing traditions, outlooks, sexuality, race, and gender are warmly welcomed is essential.

Worship

Our new Vicar will value a eucharistically-centred spirituality, and be creative and flexible in using liturgy in a variety of styles, including worship which engages children, those looking for more reflective spaces, and those who are new to the church. S/he will prepare thoughtful and thought-provoking sermons and seek to promote our Christ Church Mission Action Plan objectives of developing music making.

Pastoral

Our new Vicar will have a friendly and personable manner ministering to people in times of celebration and sorrow. S/he will actively welcome newcomers and encourage them into deeper faith, and value all from the very old to the very young.

Organisational Skills

The demands of managing a church and taking a leading role in our team ministry require a Vicar with good organisational skills and the ability to delegate to and support and manage volunteers. It will be important to balance competing calls on time and to prioritise what is important over and above what seems easy or urgent.



CHURCH PROFILE

CHRIST CHURCH, COLLIER'S WOOD

58 Christchurch Road, London SW19 2NY

Christ Church welcomes parishioners of all ages to join in the weekly worship and enjoy the friendly atmosphere. We are a church that cares for others, young and old. We believe that men and women, young people and children are equal and that people of all races and sexual orientation, physical and mental abilities should be treated equally. As an inclusive church all members are enabled to participate and take on key pastoral and organisational roles.

OUR DISTRICT

Colliers Wood is a community of over 12,000 people, and has a distinct identity. There are active community bodies, a residents' association, a community centre, and a high street. The area is a changing community, becoming increasingly younger and affluent partly due to extensive flat building in the area, and excellent transport links to Central London (the church is sited by a Northern Line Tube station) are highly valued.

The church has links with the local primary school, Singlegate, which includes children taking part in our Christmas services and enjoying church visits as part of their syllabus. We are looking to establish links with the recently built secondary school, Harris Academy Wimbledon.

The church is an important resource for community life. Colliers Wood Arts Festival and Colliers Wood Chorus regularly use the church for events. A community garden on the church's land has been developed by a local group. Events within the church such as our Quiz nights help to raise funds for local and national charities such as Faith In Action, Christian Aid, Merton Refuge, the Children's Society and Children in Need.

During December and January each year Christ Church participates with the rest of the Team in a Night Shelter for homeless people. This is an ecumenical project co-ordinated by workers from Merton Faith in Action. This project is very well supported and has drawn in many non-church people as volunteers.

CHURCH BUILDINGS

The impressive church interior is full of character, with detailed stained glass windows and fresh flowers. With the feeling of a village church, it is sited on a green area – useful for events – in an urban environment.

The church was built in 1874, giving it a great sense of history. Despite severe damage during the Second World War the church still stands as a prominent pillar of the local Christian community.

There is a separate church hall, built post war, which has been extensively refurbished in the last 15 years, and has kitchen, toilets, and storage, as well as a large hall. The Hall is hired on a full-time basis to a local nursery, providing an excellent source of income.

In 2024, Christ Church celebrated 150 years of worship in the building. Part of the celebration was to apply for a faculty to change the rear of the building to include toilets and a kitchen area as currently there is no water or facilities in the church. An aim of raising £150,000 was set in motion to be able to pay for this and is still ongoing. Architectural plans have been drawn up and submitted to the Diocese for approval. The public notice on this work has now been completed and we are waiting for the application to be approved by the Chancellor.



SERVICES

Christ Church's Sunday morning Parish Eucharist is the cornerstone of its worship. The worship aims to be inclusive of people with different experiences of church, and musically is a combination of traditional hymns sung to organ accompaniment and more modern music. The diverse and largely self-organising congregation takes an active part, from assisting with the distribution of the sacrament to reading lessons and leading the intercessions. The congregation enjoys sermons that are thoughtful and thought-provoking, often with an emphasis on relating the Gospel to contemporary life. The first service of each month is all-age, and the participation of children at services is welcome and encouraged.

Due to the hall being a full-time nursery, there is a lack of space to accommodate children during the service, however activities are supplied. Younger children are well-catered for with a dedicated space at the back of the church.

There are special services throughout the year that are well attended by the community: our community Christmas service for the Feast of St Nicholas, Mothering Sunday, Easter Day, Ascension Day, and Harvest Festival are particular highlights.

There is a monthly Sunday 8am BCP Holy Communion service for those that enjoy its simplicity. Members of the congregation are involved in running the team-wide Meditation. Special events such as alternative forms of worship for Holy Week are held jointly with the other team churches. There is a Saturday morning said Eucharist, and a dedicated prayer group which meets on a Wednesday evening.



MUSIC

Christ Church has an organist who sometimes assists with small choirs. The organ is used for traditional hymns, although there is also an appetite in the congregation to explore new styles of music and broaden participation in music making.

In addition, Christ Church is fortunate to have a peal of bells cast in 1884. Our bell ringers are very keen and ring every Sunday. We practise on a Thursday evening and visit other towers in the area. The really keen ringers ring longer peals sometimes up to 3 hours. Evidence of 'peals' can be read on boards displayed in the bell tower.

OUR CONGREGATION

The congregation at Christ Church is diverse both in terms of age and race. The church is a landmark in the local area and services such as Easter and Christmas are an opportunity to welcome new people into church.

There are constantly new faces in the congregation, many of them young families and a priority for the church is to transform visitors into becoming regular parishioners.

Service statistics 2024 - SERVICES/OCCASIONAL OFFICES 2024



YOUNG PEOPLE

Following the pandemic, there has been a drop in the number of children attending the church. However, we have been involved in a successful joint enterprise with the local Methodist Church, running a popular parent and toddler drop-in group and a one-week holiday club in a local school.

PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral care is exercised through fellowship groups, such as a house group, a prayer group, and through home visiting. We have one SPA (Southwark Pastoral Auxiliary); her responsibilities include supporting members of the congregation who are vulnerable and live alone. She is also currently running the Prayer Group and assists with welcoming of new people. There has been an aspiration to develop a Network of Care to provide a more robust structure for pastoral work already taking place.



FINANCES

Christ Church's main sources of income are giving from the congregation and rental income from the hall.

Total income for 2024 was about £50,000, which includes income from donations and planned giving. We also received about £40,000 rental income from renting both the church hall (to the Nursery) and the church.

In 2024 the Chancel was decorated and the lighting was replaced at a cost of approximately £25,000. In addition, we have been fundraising for the installation of toilets and basic kitchen facilities in the church. To date (November 2025), the total amount raised is in the region of £60,000 towards a target of £150,000.

There is a core group of congregation members who are part of the regular giving scheme (2024, standing orders totalled £19,600 and the Free Will envelope giving scheme totalled £7,400). Increasing participation in regular giving is something the church continues to focus on as the best way of raising income. Given the changing profile of Colliers Wood, and therefore the congregation, we believe there should be scope for increasing giving over the next few years.

The church contributed £40,800 to the Diocese under the Parish Support Fund in 2024.

THE VICARAGE

Christ Church Vicarage is a substantial and comfortable five-bedroom house built in the 1950s. Set behind the church it is an excellent home from which to minister. It has extensive gardens which include a raised vegetable plot, fruit trees and a very fruitful blackberry bramble. The garden is included in Christ Church Eco Church profile as, in addition to the plants, it contains log piles for insect life and a small pond home to frogs and many newts.

Situated in the heart of the Colliers Wood community the vicarage is within easy walking distance of many shops and with nearby access to the Northern Line and local bus services.



NEXT STEPS

If you are interested in finding out more, please contact the Archdeacon of Lambeth, the Ven Simon Gates, for an informal conversation about the role. He can be contacted on simon.gates@southwark.anglican.org.

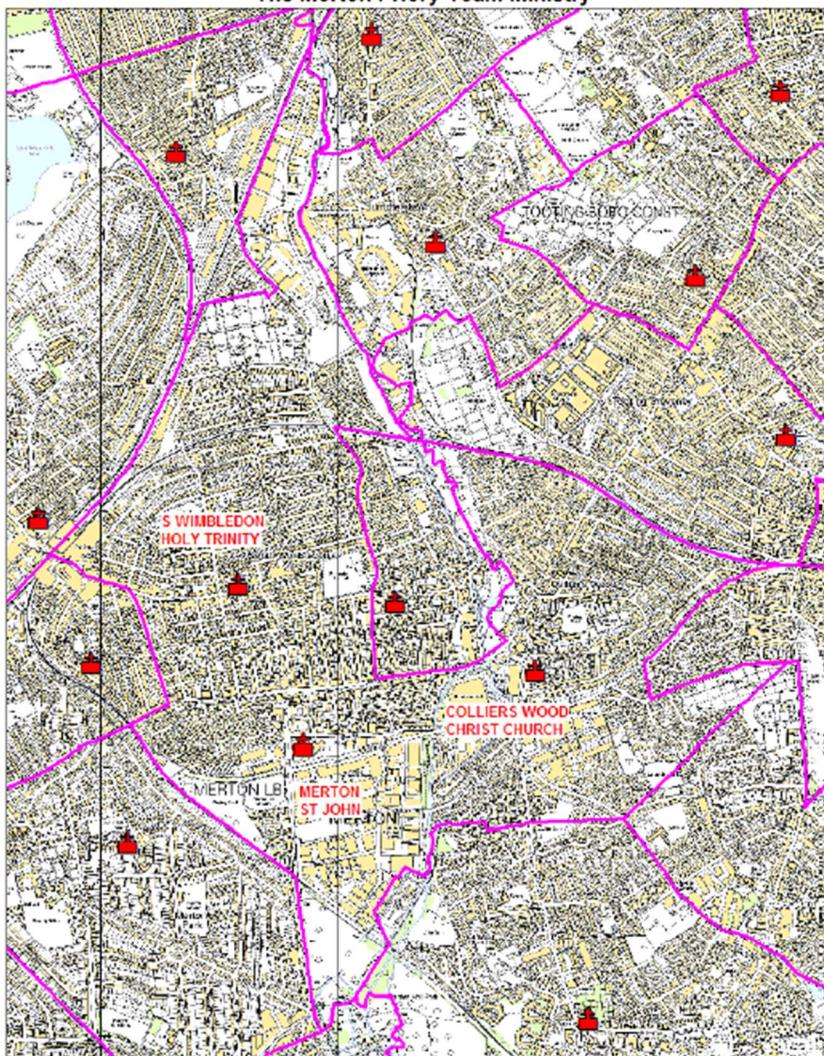
To apply, please submit an application on Pathways:

<https://www.cofepathways.org/members/modules/job/detail.php?record=9549>

Closing date: Sunday 1 February

Interviews: Thursday 26 February

The Merton Priory Team Ministry



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