



The Parish Profile of Brixton St Matthew with St Jude May 2025



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Introduction

The parish of Brixton St Matthew with St Jude is looking for a new priest. Please read on to gain an overview of the parish, the congregation of St Matthew's parish church, including our priorities and hopes for the future, and some background about our traditions and heritage as a worshipping community. We hope you enjoy reading and that this parish profile helps you to understand a little about us and life in Brixton.

We are a dedicated congregation and team committed to bringing the light of Christ to Brixton, but we want to be better disciples, more able to serve God and others and to grow as a church. We believe we are welcoming and inclusive but we want to be better able to meet our stated commitment to welcome all, regardless of age, relationship status, class, race, disability, gender identity or sexuality, and regardless of how much or how little faith people have when they join us.

We believe that the parish and our congregation have a lot to offer an open hearted vicar who is willing and able to take us into new things in a spirit of listening, kindness and respect. Brixton has always been a challenging place to work and live but it will also be rewarding for the right person. The large St Matthew's building is strategically positioned in the heart of Brixton. It is a great place to bring people and organisations together. A new priest keen to form such networks and relationships would receive a warm welcome from our immediate neighbours at the Council, across Windrush Square and from churches and community organisations in the parish.

We know that times change and that a new priest will bring their own perspectives and experience. We welcome the fresh energy this will bring and pray for someone able to build on the richness and depth of what we are trying to create in St Matthew's and who feels that a move to serve Jesus in Brixton may be the right one for them.

The St Matthew's Congregation

St Matthew's congregation comes from a wide variety of backgrounds including Black African and Caribbean and white British/ European. Some have been coming to St Matthew's for 60 years and more; others for a few months. Similar to Lambeth as a whole the parish has a mobile population. Some will attend for a few years before moving for family, employment or other reasons.

The congregation is also diverse in terms of age, sexuality, family arrangements, income and class as well as church experience. People are from all wings of the Church of England and Anglican communion in Africa and the Caribbean, as well as from e.g., Catholic, Pentecostal, fundamentalist Baptist, Salvation Army, the Metropolitan Community Church, or no church background at all. This means that inclusion and non judgemental welcome are very important to us. We want people to be able to come as they are and experience the mystery and love of God for themselves without feeling that they have to fit into a particular shape of worship or church tradition. We welcome lesbian, gay and trans people to St Matthew's and fully accept the ordination of women and women's leadership in the church. We mark Racial Justice Sunday and continue to work on tackling racism and promoting equality in all that we do.

We seek to respect and learn from people's experience and traditions. We try not to make assumptions about people. We aim to be aware of what brings us together; our Christian faith and search for God and to affirm that we are all made in the image and likeness of God, and all are one in Christ.

Worship at St Matthew's

The eclectic heritage of the congregation has led to a style of Anglican worship that might be described as 'central' or traditional with an African-Caribbean twist. The unfathomable mystery of the Eucharist and God's unconditional love, available to all, and revealed in Christ is at the heart of worship. We aim to offer a dignified yet participative and relaxed style of service, which includes joyful singing and reflective silence.



St Matthew's Day 2024

St Matthew's follows the Church Year and the Lectionary. The priest and Reader are robed. The colour of the priest's vestments and altar frontal change with the seasons. There are candles on the altar. We do not use incense or have altar servers. The Reader often acts as Deacon. We have three readings at Sunday services and sing five hymns and appreciate a good sermon. Parts of the liturgy are sung by the congregation, supported by the choir. The Eucharistic Prayer is spoken rather than sung.

We observe the major festivals of the Church year. On St Matthew's Day in September we hold a special service, followed by a bring and share lunch. Unlike some traditions, St Matthew's does not give prominence to special festivals or prayers dedicated to the Virgin Mary. There is no votive candle stand.

Early Sunday and midweek services are attended by a small number of regular attendees. Attendance at the Parish Eucharist is variable from about 25-45 adults apart from high days and holidays when it can be a little more. We encourage people to stay for refreshments after the service.

Worship services at St Matthew's



Sundays

08:00 Holy Communion (Common Worship Order 1 – Traditional Language)

10:00 Parish Eucharist (broadcast live on YouTube). Liturgy based on Order 1 – Contemporary Language

Weekdays

08:30 Tuesday & Thursday: Morning Prayer (Common Worship). When the vicar was in post this included Holy Communion (Order 1).

Music at St Matthew's

Music is important and singing is heartfelt at St Matthew's. The congregation enjoy singing. Hymns Ancient and Modern (2013 edition) and Lift Every Voice and Sing II (an African American hymnal published by the Episcopal Church of the USA) are used. During the final hymn children (and any willing adult) have the opportunity to join with percussion instruments.

The sung parts of the liturgy have been composed specially for St Matthew's by our musical director and organist Francis Reneau MBE OBE. Francis leads a small, well established adult choir who lead singing on Sunday mornings. Both a traditional electric church organ and an electronic keyboard are used in services.

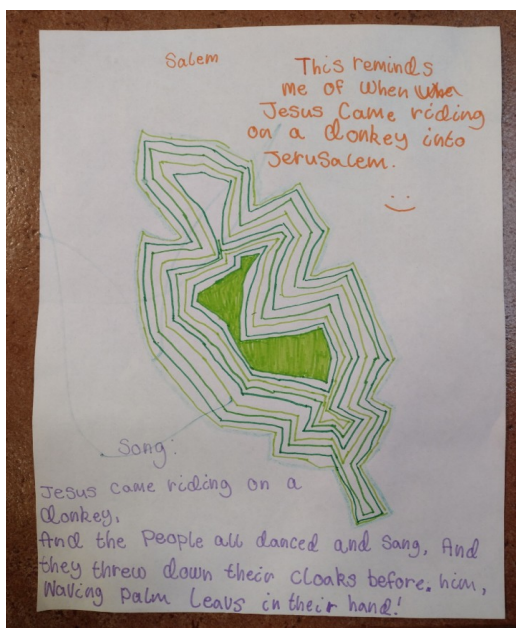
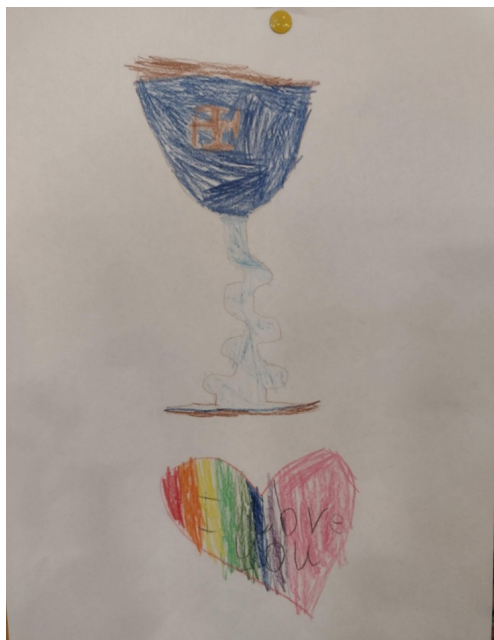
Children's Worship at St Matthew's

There is a flourishing 'Diddy Disciples' group at St Matthew's for babies and children up to the end of primary school.¹ Parents join in and take turns to lead, alongside volunteers from the congregation. Sessions generally follow the church seasons and themes. Active participation is encouraged with lots of singing, movement, prayers and creative responses.



Parents say that being part of Diddy Disciples makes their children enthusiastic about coming to church and helps them to feel part of the wider St Matthew's Church family.

At present no secondary school children regularly attend church

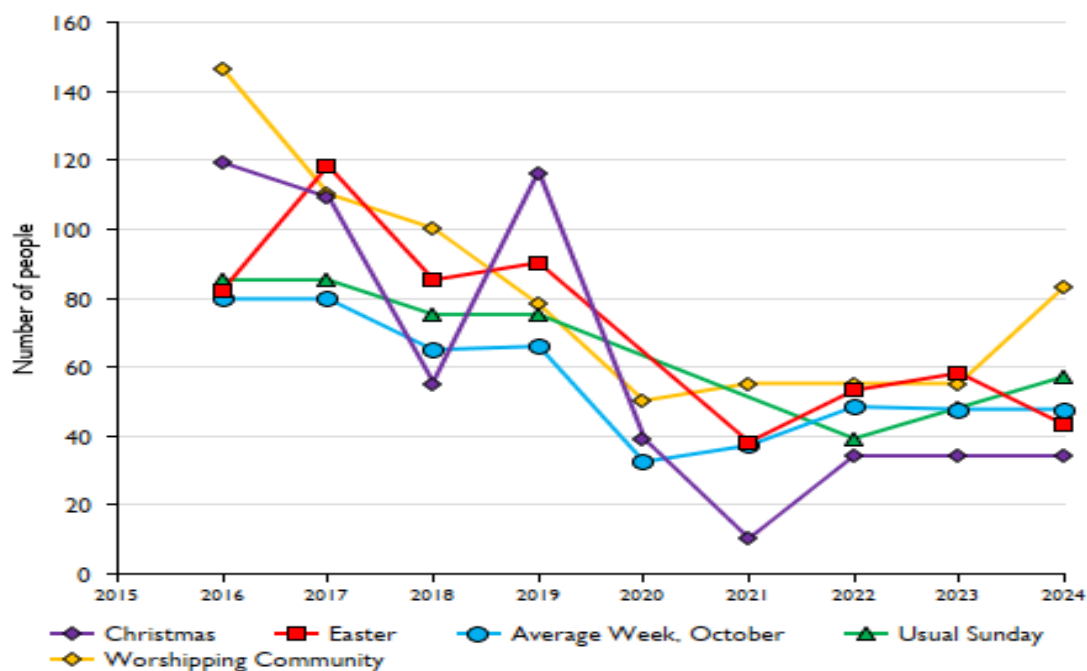


¹. Diddy Disciples is a programme created by Rev Dr Sharon Moughtin. <https://www.diddydisciples.org>

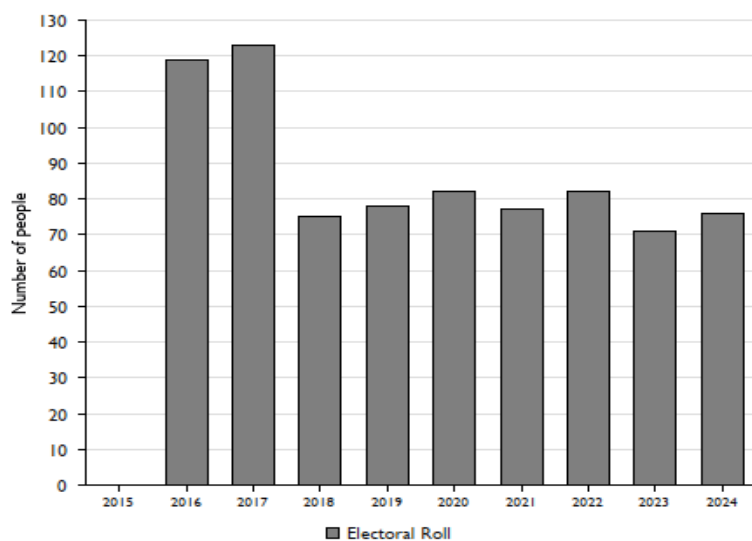
Attendance and church membership

Church attendance has declined substantially since 2015 (see graph) although numbers seem to have stabilised since a low point during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown.

Church attendance at St Matthew's Brixton 2016–2024



The electoral roll reduced to between 70–80 after a full revision in 2017–18 (see graph) and the most recent revision in April 2025 show that numbers have fallen again to 52. Relatively few baptisms (10 in the last 5 years) and funerals (9 in the last 5 years) are conducted at St Matthew's and no weddings have been celebrated since 2016.



St Matthew's Brixton Electoral Roll 2016– 2024

Church activities, mission and outreach

Pastoral Contact Group: St Matthew's Pastoral Contact Group offers prayer, contact and practical support to people requesting prayer including through our confidential prayer box, and to more vulnerable members of the congregation. The group aims to ensure that people unable to get to church continue to feel fully part of the church family, people who are ill are prayed for regularly and all asking for prayer know that they are supported. The group includes the Churchwarden, Reader and other volunteers and meets monthly online or in church to pray and organise any contact or support people may need. An essential principle is to respect the confidentiality of members of the congregation and not to share information beyond the group.

Lent and Advent 'Book Groups': St Matthew's runs a book group in Lent and often in Advent. In the last 3 years we have read A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens, Jayber Crow by Wendell Berry, This Here Flesh by Cole Arthur Riley and Tarry Awhile by Selina Stone, as well as following a course about contemplative prayer and worship. We often run the sessions by asking different people to review a section or chapter and lead discussion. We find this a great way to get different insights and perspectives.

Foodbank: St Matthew's is very aware of the extent of food poverty and the cost of living crisis which has become worse since the pandemic and energy price increases. The congregation has been generous donors to the local foodbank for many years, taking contributions every month and offering the option to donate money using our CollecTin.

Robes Project for homeless people: St Matthews has participated in Robes (<https://robes.org.uk/>), the Southwark & Lambeth project to offer accommodation in churches and church halls over winter months for several years (apart from the last two years). Groups of 7 churches each offer 1 night a week to 15 people for 8–10 weeks whilst the Robes staff work to find guests longer term accommodation. Members of the congregation and other local volunteers found the experience rewarding and look forward to the opportunity to participate again.

Other activities

In previous years St Matthew's has organised weekends away and day retreats. During Lent a few years ago an Environment Group formed to increase congregational awareness of global warming and what practical action we could take to live more sustainably. We held discussions, set up displays, held a special service and had relevant sermons.

For many years St Matthew's was actively involved (in fact one of the founder organisations) in the Lambeth Chapter of Citizens UK, the nationwide organisation dedicated to community organising. This included local action against extortionate money lenders and seeking to influence local government and the London mayoral agenda. Lambeth Citizens was a valuable way to meet people from other sections of the community; schools, other churches and faith groups, researchers, tenants & residents associations, local government and the police etc and encouraged members of the congregation to feel they could change things through their actions.

Working with other churches & faith based organisations in the area

St Matthew's maintains links with Faiths Together in Lambeth and will be participating in a recently organised forum for the faith based voluntary sector in the borough. Lay Representatives attend the Lambeth North Deanery Synod. PCC members (and the previous incumbent) have informal relationships with neighbouring churches of different denominations and neighbouring Anglican parishes and would very much like to develop stronger ties in the future.

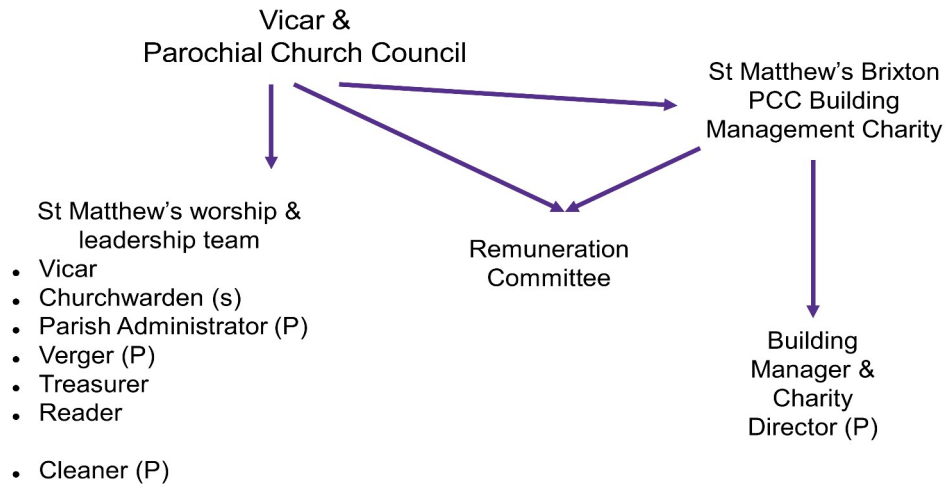
The Diocese of Southwark

Southwark Diocese is one of the largest and most diverse in England stretching from the inner city on the River Thames to rural Surrey beyond the M25. The diocesan vision for 2024–2035 is headed 'Christ Centred – Outward Focused'² as it seeks to grow its parish churches in depth of discipleship and service and witness to others. This vision very much accords with how St Matthew's Brixton wants to develop as a community. We strongly believe in the value and worth of grass roots local parish ministry as the way to bring the love of Jesus to people in our neighbourhood.

² <https://southwark.anglican.org/about-us/who-we-are/southwark-vision/>

How St Matthew's runs day to day

St Matthew's Church Brixton & Building Management Charity Organisational Diagram



Key: P = paid staff (employees or contractors)

Parochial Church Council

The PCC is composed of a diverse group of 11 people, including an experienced Treasurer and 2 churchwardens. During the vacancy the PCC has met monthly to oversee production of the Parish Profile and to attend to all aspects of church organisation.

St Matthew's Worship & Leadership Team: the 'Tuesday Morning Team'

On Tuesday mornings immediately after Morning Prayer (formerly Holy Communion), the St Matthew's team meets for 3/4-1hr over coffee and croissants. The team plans worship for the following Sunday and over the coming quarter, finalises the pew sheet and manages requests for baptisms, wedding banns etc. The team also deals with hiring enquiries and maintenance and repairs of the church space; mice, vandalised notice boards, cleaning, ordering supplies etc. A Churchwarden, the Administrator, Verger, Reader and Treasurer and the incumbent usually attend. Beyond the practical aspects the meeting has proved a valuable forum for communication, exchange of ideas and building trust as a team.

The Tuesday meeting immediately preceding the PCC acts as the Standing Committee and is attended by the Chair of the PCC.

Employees of the PCC: St Matthew's directly employs a Parish Administrator (4hrs/week) and a Verger (4hrs/week). The PCC independently contracts the organist and musical director, a cleaner (5hrs/week) and a book keeper. When funds allow we would love to be able to offer more hours to the Verger and Administrator both of whom also volunteer for many additional hours during the week.

Churchwardens: During 2025 we had one Churchwarden to oversee all aspects of church on Sundays and liaise with the Diocese about the vicarage. She is an active member of the 'Tuesday Morning Team' and PCC and plays a lead role in the spiritual and pastoral life of the congregation. This year (2025) she has led revision of the Electoral Roll. A new churchwarden was voted in at the APCM so we now have 2 in post.

Reader: St Matthew's has one Reader, licensed in 2018. At present she assists visiting clergy on Sundays as Deacon, preaches about once a month and is on 'Tuesday Morning Team'. In the absence of a vicar she manages the Parish Administrator. Together with the other lay member she represents St Matthew's at Lambeth North Deanery Synod. During Lent and Advent she has helped to lead the book/ study groups, and with groups (adults and children) preparing to be confirmed. At present she also chairs the St Matthew's Building Management Charity.

The **Parish Administrator** manages the church email account, responding to all enquiries, produces the weekly pew sheet with readings, hymns and notices and organises the various rotas for reading, leading prayers, refreshments, counting and welcome. She manages the Verger

The **Verger** is responsible for maintenance, safety, security and cleanliness of the church space. She also manages lettings of the church space ensuring organisations have the right policies and procedures in place. Until recently, for many years she also voluntarily oversaw counting and banking the church collection. She manages the cleaner.

Brixton St Matthew with St Jude PCC Finances

During the 1970s–80s the interior of the church building was re-designed. A charity was set up to oversee the building, leasing it from the Diocese. The aim of the reorganisation was to enable the wider church building to be maintained and run as a community asset and so that the PCC could focus on the mission of St Matthew's as a worshipping community. This arrangement continues today although with a new charity since 2016 (see separate section) which operates under the auspices of the PCC. This allows the church to contribute through the charity's board to developing the building for community purposes.

In the 1990's the PCC sold a building next to the Vicarage and invested the proceeds into Diocesan investment funds. When the PCC first invested the proceeds from selling the building, there was strong congregational and clergy-led desire to support new initiatives across the parish and the church space was refurbished. Over time congregational giving, rental of the church space and other sources of income, declined and costs went up. Maintaining these objectives became more difficult.

Even so, before the pandemic the church benefitted from regular lettings and managed essential finances. This was not sustained during lockdown. Many regular givers were only using the plate collection or left Brixton. 2020–2024 was very challenging and the PCC had to rely more on income from investments and sale of investment assets.

However St Matthew's tries to maintain a reasonable contribution to Parish Share and over 2024–25 with supportive ideas and visits from Diocesan colleagues, regular giving has increased and new rentals have been organised. The 200th anniversary celebrations at St Matthew's were a particular success. The church raised all funds needed for various celebratory events, alongside brilliant volunteer effort from the congregation.

The PCC 2025 budget is projected to break even without the sale of assets for the first time in several years. Finances are carefully managed by the Treasurer and regular reports are made to the PCC. Accounts are prepared by a freelance accountant who acts as book keeper and are presented for approval to the Annual Parish Meeting.

2025 Budget Summary

RECEIPTS (£)		PAYMENTS (£)	
Planned Giving	18,840	Parish Share	43,475
Other Giving & Gift Aid Refund	23,000	Mission	4,000
Other Income	7,535	Running Costs	6,000
Fundraising Income	2,200	Staff	10,300
Investment Income	16,000	Other Expenses	3,800
TOTAL RECEIPTS	67,575	TOTAL PAYMENTS	67,575

Balance Sheet at 31ST December 2024 (£)

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024
Fixed Assets	10,469		10,469
Investment Assets	587,652		587,652
Net Current Assets	17,108		17,108
TOTAL NET ASSETS	615,229		615,229
PARISH FUNDS			
Unrestricted General Fund	17,108		17,108
Designated Funds	598,121		598,121
Restricted Funds			
TOTAL FUNDS	615,229		615,229

Full 2024 accounts are available on the parish website: stmatthewsbrixton.org

St Matthew's, The Building And Its History

St Matthew's church building is Grade 2* listed. It was originally built for a congregation of two thousand and consecrated in 1824. The restructure and reorganisation in the 1970s and 80s included addition of extra floors and installation of a spiral staircase and lift in the former nave. The building now includes spaces and offices for rent or hire including; two large halls, a suite of 14 offices on the upper floors, and space until recently occupied by a restaurant in the crypt which has its own entrance. The ground floor is split between the worship space retained by the PCC, 6 more offices and a meeting space for hire, which 'Diddy Disciples' use on Sundays.

The entrance to the rest of the building is at basement level on the north side which also provides wheelchair access for the church.

St Matthew's Worship Space

St Matthew's worship space is at the west end of the building immediately behind the main entrance facing Brixton Hill and the new Civic Centre of Lambeth Council.



This section was formalised and reconsecrated at the beginning of the 1990s. St Matthew's Church leases this space from the main lessee, the Building Management Charity (see next section), licensed for public worship, at a peppercorn rent.

The space is warm and light, with oak panelled walls and furniture. The design is traditional yet flexible, enabling worship to take place 'in the round.' This enhances participation in all aspects of the service. At Communion the congregation forms a semicircle before the altar, promoting awareness of being the Body of Christ.

Flexible seating and level access including to the adjacent side chapel and vestry, main church office, kitchen and rear meeting space means the church is accessible to disabled people including wheelchair users. A gallery with extra seating, 3 more offices and the gents toilet is accessible via 2 spiral staircases and the lift.

St Matthew's Side Chapel



St Matthew's Bicentennial 1824–2024

In 2024 three of the four Waterloo Churches, St Matthew's Brixton, St John's Waterloo and St Mark's Kennington celebrated 200 years since consecration (St Luke's West Norwood was consecrated a year later).



For its celebrations St Matthew's researched, curated and exhibited an extensive history of St Matthew's. This was unveiled at a special tea party in June with singing from a community gospel choir (a St Matthew's tenant) and cutting of a beautiful cake. The following Sunday, a service of thanksgiving was held with the Bishop of Southwark presiding and sermon by Rev Eve Pitts, the first black woman to be ordained in the Church of England.

In September, the four churches jointly organised a bicentennial walk from St Luke's to St John's, stopping at each church for prayer and refreshments. Celebrations continued at St Matthew's Day and at our community carol service in early December which was attended by local councillors and followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

Outside the church

St Matthew's building has its own car park at the front. The grassy area, known as the Peace Garden (the former churchyard), is run by Lambeth Council. The Building Management Charity has worked extensively with the Council and Lambeth Police to improve the quality of the garden area; repairing street lights, reorganising litter collection and successfully lobbying for increased police activity to reduce drug dealing and other crime. As a result of raising the profile of the issues, Thamesreach charity set up an outreach team who in the 3 months prior to writing made contact with over 300 people to help direct them to appropriate support.



St Matthew's Vicarage



The St Matthew's Vicarage is a spacious Grade 2 listed, 4 bedroom Victorian house in central Brixton c.100m from the church. It has a garage, cellar and a large garden. Renovations and upgrading are in progress.

St Matthew's Brixton PCC Building Management Charity (BMC)

In the 1990s the building apart from the worship space was de-consecrated and leased by the diocese to a charity formed to maintain and promote the building for community benefit, specifically letting the space for rent and hire to local charities and community organisations. This became an increasingly challenging brief and in 2016 the St Matthew's PCC decided to resume control. It dissolved the former organisation and set up a new charity, St Matthew's Brixton PCC Building Management Charity (BMC).

The Building Management Charity directly employs a Building Manager and contracts the services of an external bookkeeper. It has a degree of independence from the PCC with its own Board of Trustees. However the PCC is the sole 'member' of the charity allowing it to appoint and remove trustees. At present all trustees are members of the St Matthew's congregation.

The Charity continues to maintain and promote the building for community activities and to build relationships with local charities, choirs, orchestras and grass roots organisations who value the opportunity to make St Matthew's their base for offices, conferences, events, practice sessions etc. The Church and the Charity have common goals in this regard and both organisations seek to collaborate with maintenance and lettings.

The Charity finances its community purposes by commercially letting some spaces in the building. This has become more of a challenge since the Covid-19 lockdown and the recent departure of a large commercial tenant. To manage its cash flow over the next 2-3 months, the Charity is seeking to raise funds for the first time, including by holding a concert with local performers and others who are part of the Charity's enlarging network of supporters.

The previous vicar chaired the Building Management Charity but there is no obligation for a new vicar to do so as this decision is in the hands of the Board of Trustees. However it is expected that the vicar will take a strong interest in the Charity's activities.

The last Quinquennial inspection³ found a number of issues to be addressed and the Building Charity continue to pursue repairs as funds allow.

Annual Accounts are posted on the Charity Commission website

³Please see our website for details

St Jude's School

The Parish includes St Jude's Church of England Primary School, a voluntary-aided school where the church appoints six of the eleven school governors. The vicar of St Matthew's is expected to serve on the school's governing board in an ex-officio role.

Located in the heart of Herne Hill, opposite Brockwell Park, St Jude's is a vibrant and welcoming school, committed to providing an exceptional education within a Christian framework of values and beliefs. It serves the local community with dedication and care.

St Jude's has 161 pupils enrolled and is in a partnership with two other Church of England schools; St George's in Camberwell and St Saviour's in Loughborough Junction. Pupils at St Jude's consistently achieve exceptional academic results. Key Stage 2 pupils perform higher than both London and national averages in reading and maths. The school has received positive feedback from Ofsted, which rates it as 'Good,' and SIAMS, the Church of England's school inspectorate, which has awarded an 'Outstanding' rating.

The school continues to make impressive progress but faces challenges, particularly in supporting a significant number of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). St Jude's is dedicated to providing the best possible education for all its pupils, and works closely with Lambeth Schools Services and the Southwark Diocese Board of Education to ensure that tailored support is offered to children who need it most.

Beyond academic achievements, St Jude's encourages personal development through extracurricular activities, including school clubs, trips, and visits. Recently, the school expanded its pupil leadership initiatives, empowering students to take ownership of important issues in the school community.

A hallmark of St Jude's is its commitment to nurturing pupils in a diverse environment, whilst also celebrating the Christian faith. Christian values are central to the school's ethos. The vicar of St Matthew's plays an important role in the spiritual life of the school to support staff in achieving this ethos, regularly leading collective worship and contributing to the wider spiritual development of the pupils.

What the congregation say about themselves and their hopes for the future

The PCC invited the congregation to say what they were looking for when they came to St Matthew's; what they like about church and church life; what they would like to change; how they see the future, and what they would like to see in a new priest. Just over 30 people responded (about two thirds of the congregation) either individually or in 2 group 'chats' held after church.

Frequently mentioned was the warm, friendly, welcoming nature of church, the diversity of the congregation and its desire to be inclusive including of lesbian and gay people and to be more active about racial justice. The mixture of formal and informal, traditional and more contemporary worship and liturgy is valued along with the influence of Black African-Caribbean traditions. People love the music and the choir. The presence of the children and the Diddy Disciples is very much liked, not just by children and their parents. People enjoy the way festivals like St Matthew's Day are celebrated with a 'bring and share' meal and lots of socialising.

Concern was expressed about the anti-social behaviour around the church. People want to help but don't know how except by cleaning up or extra security. Many people would like to see St Matthew's being more active in community activities for homeless people, the foodbank, etc., and joining with other local organisations and churches to improve the lives of local people.

In church people would like to see: a renewal of our vision; more regular Bible study and prayer (with an emphasis on open and honest discussion rather than being told what to think and believe); ways to make the midweek services more accessible to the working population of Brixton, and perhaps a 'beginners church' for explorers (but more flexible and open than Alpha). Frequently mentioned was the desire to have more of an offer for young people, and to have better links with St Jude's School, as well as other activities that might be of interest to adults or older people.

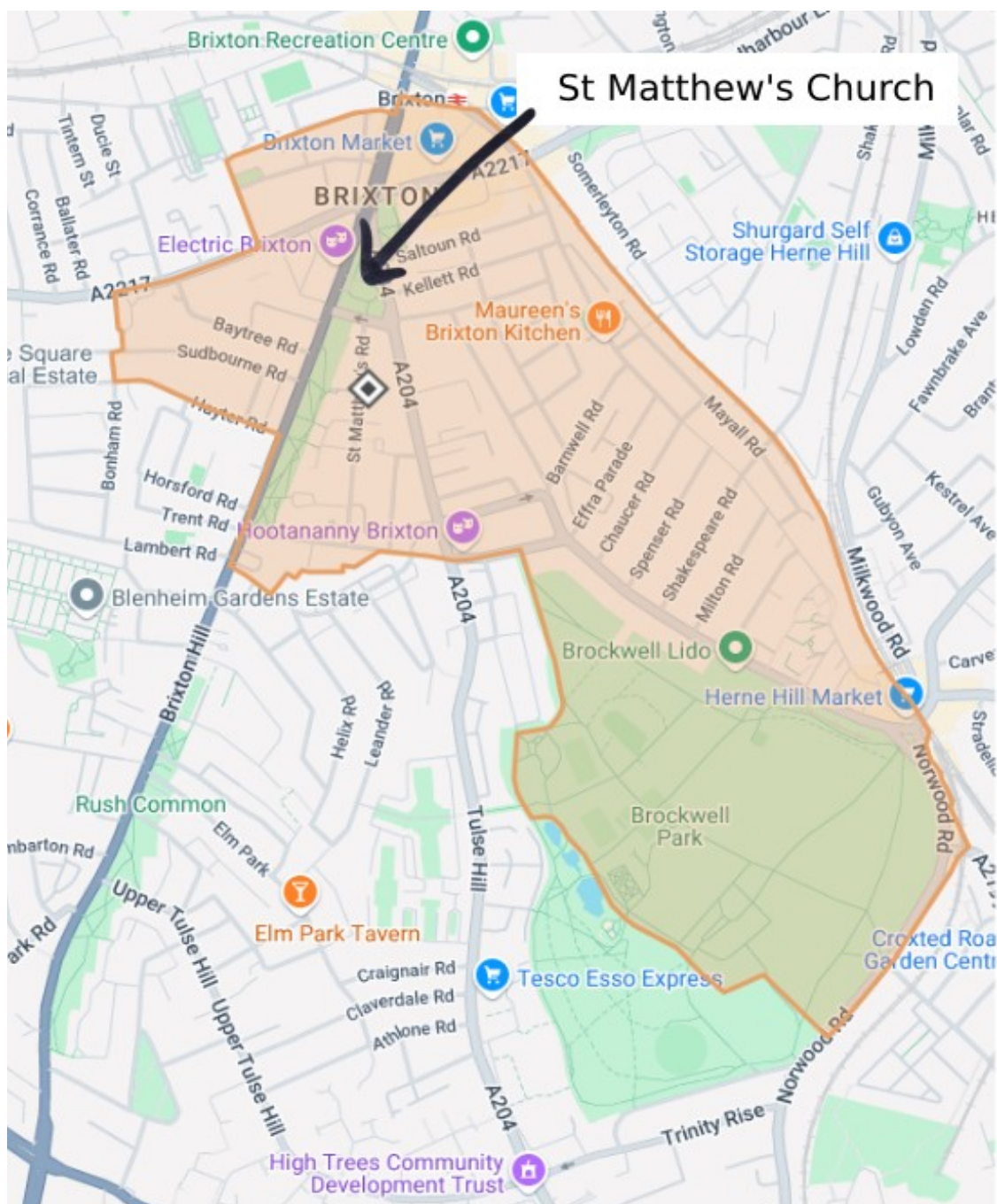
People are concerned about the future of St Matthew's as people age and some people move out as well as the potential for drift without a clear vision, including a drift

towards either a more Evangelical or a more high church stance rather than seeking to maintain the careful balance people appreciate and come and stay for.

People are therefore hoping for a priest who

- is comfortable with the style of worship and liturgy at St Matthew's, respectful of the African and Caribbean traditions and experience, and enthusiastic about being a member of a broad church community with diverse religious, racial and cultural backgrounds and sexuality, who can inspire us to be more loving and giving and to take more positive action on racial justice
- is eager to improve the church's relationship with its community, is outgoing in orientation and a good communicator
- wants to be actively involved in drawing St Jude's school closer to the congregation
- is open minded, honest, humble, inclusive, and enthusiastic, with a 'good heart', committed to serving wholeheartedly and being there for everyone, a good listener and problem solver
- can grow and share leadership across the congregation and can cooperate with the congregation, yet with authority to guide
- is a person of prayer, open to questions, excited to meet people, able to bring people on in their faith and preach well.
- recognises the importance of diversity and inclusion, is sensitive to issues of racial justice and racial equality, wants to include LGBT people, is supportive of gay marriage/ same sex blessings and willing to use Prayers of Love and Faith when authorised by the Church of England
- is positive about and good at pastoral care and open to people seeking different kinds of help
- is keen to link with other organisations and denominations in the neighbourhood who share our values and goals

The Parish of Brixton St Matthew with St Jude



The Parish of Brixton, St Matthew with St Jude, was formed in 2001 with the merger of the former St Jude Parish and the former St Matthew Parish. The parish is about 3 miles south of central London in the inner London Borough of Lambeth.

The parish covers only half a square mile but is home to a relatively large population of approximately 12,000 people.

Brixton is renowned for its vibrant and diverse culture. Historically, it has been a focal point for the African Caribbean population in London, a legacy that dates back to the mid-20th century when many people from the Caribbean settled in the area.

According to the 2021 census, 37% of the parish population identified as Christian, lower than the national figure of 46%. Islam is practised by approximately 7.5% of the parish, slightly above the national figure of 6%.

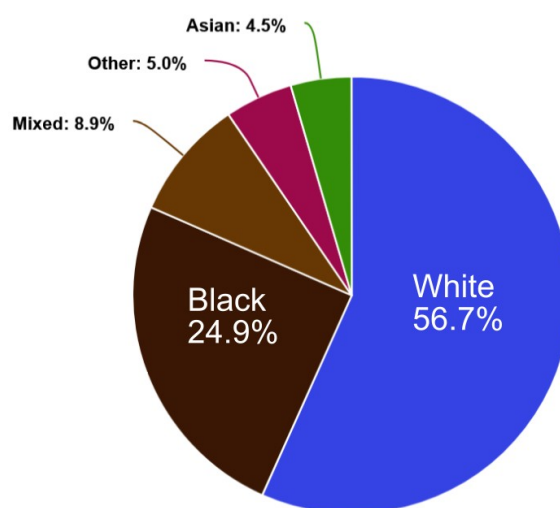
The parish is not wealthy being in the bottom 14th percentile nationally for deprivation. However, there are still pockets of affluence. An average semi-detached property in the area is estimated to cost around £978,000.

Regrettably over the last 5 years especially since the pandemic, crime and anti-social behaviour worsened in Brixton including around St Matthew's and the Peace Garden with open drug dealing and prostitution. The situation has proved challenging to address and a disincentive to prospective tenants of the wider building. The church and the Building Management Charity liaise actively with the Metropolitan Police and the Council about security and better targeted services. We are part of locally initiated campaigns to increase investment in the 4 Brixton wards which are local crime hot spots, and to achieve more active, strategic as well as compassionate ways to address the issues. In the last few months the substantial efforts of the Building Charity's Manager over the previous 2 years has begun to make a difference and the area is becoming more pleasant and peaceful for all.

An Ethnically Diverse Parish

According to the census about 57% of the parish are White (including White non British) and people of Black and mixed race background make up a further third of the population. This is similar to the local deanery. We are a slightly less white parish than the diocese as a whole, and much less white than the national average.

Lambeth has a mobile population. Many people move in and out of the borough every year. Also many people commute in and out of the parish every day, for school, work, and leisure.



A Linguistically Diverse Parish

Around 150 languages are spoken in Lambeth including many Spanish and Portuguese speakers. The Lambeth Borough School Pupil Survey (see table) is likely to be representative of the parish as a whole. St Matthew's currently only offers services in English.

First Language Percentage

English	51.8%
Spanish	7.1%
Portuguese	6.0%
Somali	3.8%
French	3.1%
Yoruba	2.1%
Akan/Twi-Fante	2.1%
Polish	2.8%
Arabic	3.1%
Bengali	1.2%

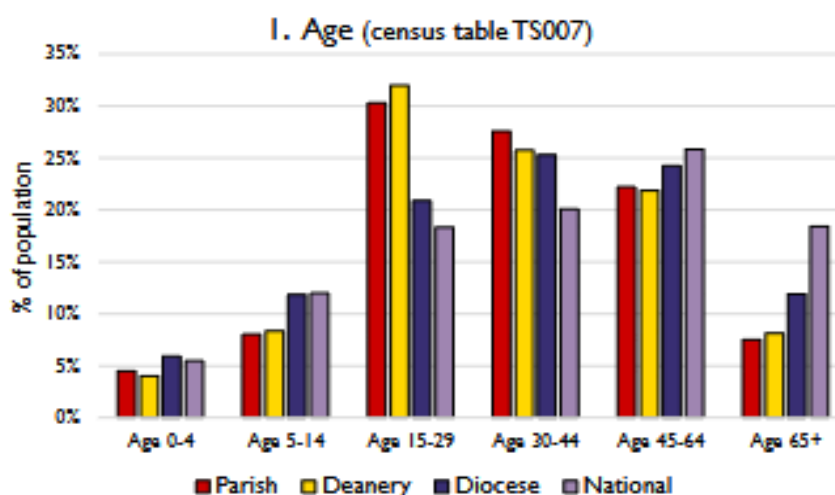
An Educated Parish

There are three schools in the parish: Effra Nursery School, which has recently merged with another nursery, and now has 150 children on roll, Sudbourne Primary (300 on roll) and our own St Jude's Church of England (VA) school (161 on roll).

The parish scores just above average for education in the Index of Multiple Deprivation, which takes into account local school results as well as formal adult qualifications.

A Young Parish

Since Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic, the number of young children living in London has declined. Also many people choose to retire in areas with less expensive



property. For that reason, the parish has a low number of very young people, and a comparatively low number of older people. Brixton's reputation as an exciting, creative and interesting place to live makes it attractive to young people of working-age which means that the parish has a comparatively large number of 15 to 44 year olds.

Households in the parish are more likely to be single-occupancy than elsewhere in the country and are less likely to include dependent children. Schools in the area are under subscribed and suffer budget constraints.

A Bustling Parish

Across the road from the church sandwiched between the refurbished Town Hall and new Civic Centre is the popular 1,500 capacity Electric Brixton music venue (formerly known as The Fridge).

The parish encompasses both Brixton tube and railway stations. Approximately 26,000 passengers use the tube daily. Whilst evangelism and leaflet distribution are not permitted in the station, outside it is common to find individuals and groups singing, calling the crowds to repent and, or handing out all kinds of literature. The railway station accommodates about one-tenth of the passenger volume of the tube station.

The parish encompasses part of Brockwell Park, a 50-hectare green space featuring cafés, a popular lido, and various sporting and recreational facilities. During the summer, the park controversially hosts numerous commercial music concerts. Additionally, it is the venue for the Lambeth Country Show, one of the biggest free festivals in the UK, attracting approximately 120,000 visitors over a weekend.

Central Brixton is included in the parish with the renowned Brixton Market on Electric Avenue (the inspiration for the 1980's Eddy Grant hit song of the same name).

Brixton Road is a thriving shopping location and the parish includes major stores such as Tesco, Halford's, Curry's, as well as many tiny shops in the Reliance Arcade.

A Mixed-housing Parish

Housing in the parish is approximately one-third social, one third privately rented, and one third owner occupied. Housing closest to the church is medium-rise tower blocks. St Matthew's Estate is mostly social housing, but some flats are privately owned through 'right to buy'. Somerset Place, a new 14 story tower block close to the church, was completed in 2018.

Towards the Herne Hill end of the parish, housing is mostly terraced and semi-detached late Georgian stock interspersed with modern new builds. The Meath Estate, next to St Jude's School, consists of 1960s medium-rise social housing

A Parish with a rich History

The parish includes the former St Jude's Church, which now has planning permission for conversion into flats; the former St Jude's vicarage, which featured on an episode of *Grand Designs*; the former St Jude's Parish Hall, which is now a Church of God World Fellowship church; the former St Matthew's Parish Hall, which is now a Roman Catholic community centre, and the former St Matthew's School, which was bombed during the war and is now private flats.

Next to the church is Windrush Square. This large public space includes a memorial to Cherry Groce, who was shot in her home by the police in 1985, sparking riots. It is also the site of the memorial to African and Caribbean soldiers who fought in the First and Second World Wars, as a tribute to the often-overlooked role these soldiers played in the British military efforts during both conflicts. An annual service of remembrance is organised by the Nubian Jak Community Trust, whose office is in the St Matthew's building.

Who are Brixton St Matthew with St Jude looking for?

What we think will be important for a vicar to bring to the parish and the congregation.

Church

1. Worship

- To lead worship in a creative, inclusive, participative and welcoming manner in different settings and circumstances eg major festivals, the parish school, and for small and larger congregations of all ages (eg midweek and Sundays)
- To use forms of service that value and enhance our style and tradition of worship
- To preach and teach so as to challenge, inspire, revitalise and develop people's faith in Christ
- To build the confidence and competence of others to lead in different ways
- To practise non judgemental welcome in line with our statement of inclusion and help us to do the same so that whether someone is in church for the first time or the umpteenth time they know that they are appreciated, valued and that God loves them

2. Congregation building: adults, children & young people

- To be a creative, sensitive, non judgemental and inclusive spiritual leader, able to guide others in how they might come to know God better for themselves including through reflective & thoughtful study of the Bible
- To encourage and lead the congregation in prayer and to develop church and individual prayer life
- To develop the pastoral care work of the congregation
- To develop our ministry to children & young people and to their parents
- To take time to help us all to build trusting relationships as a congregation
- To encourage financial stewardship in the congregation so we are better able to be sustainable and to support our mission and charitable ambitions

Team and leadership development

- To be collaborative and empowering so as to enable and facilitate the PCC, the wider leadership team and the congregation to develop our vision for mission and ministry and help us to organise and achieve it
- To delegate effectively, supporting others to develop skills and take on new roles
- To help others discern their potential for all kinds of lay and ordained ministry and encourage and support people to put themselves forward
- To appreciate the need for good organisation of church activities and support the church team to be efficient and effective so that administrative processes and policies are up to date and meet legal and diocesan requirements

Community & Mission

Parish

- To work with the PCC and the congregation to get to know the parish and the main organisations and leaders whose goals for improving the wellbeing of Brixton people accord with ours and see how we can contribute.
- To seek to form partnerships with other organisations, faith based and otherwise that complement what we can contribute to making Brixton a better, safer place to live, grow, learn, work and be
- To take time to understand the challenges people in the parish face and help the congregation to respond appropriately in prayer, the way we do church and in practical action
- To form collaborative and cooperative relationships with our CofE neighbours especially in Lambeth North Deanery through chapter and synod and across the diocese with a view to what we may be able to do in partnership, sharing resources and skills across parishes

School

- To perform the role of chaplain to the school, ministering to
 - the children so as to contribute to the children's Christian education and formation
 - staff and parents so that they are confident of the church's support to the school and the welfare of their children
- To sit on the school's governing body and act as a representative of St Matthew's Church to ensure that the school is at all times well run

St Matthew's Building

- To work with the Building Management Charity and the PCC on the next stage of developing the building for community and church use, being both ambitious about the potential and realistic about what can be done

Personal

- To engage in continuing ministerial development as requested by the Bishop
- To be committed to developing their own skills and understanding as a disciple of Christ, taking time for reflection, quiet days and life outside church
- Able to take care of their own spiritual, psychological and physical health & wellbeing with a good repertoire of spiritual and psychological strategies and practices

The responsibilities listed may be supported by long and short term objectives to be agreed between the post holder and the Archdeacon and Church Wardens

Person specification

the essential skills, experience and perspectives the panel will use to shortlist and interview

	Essential	Desirable
Education, qualifications, knowledge	Satisfactory completion of all necessary Ministerial Education to be a vicar in the Church of England	Other professional qualifications or background for a career before entering ministry
	Ordained priest in the Church of England	Further qualifications in theology or relevant to Christian ministry eg youth work, community organising
	Committed to continuing professional and personal development to enhance community leadership abilities	
	Knowledge of the challenges and opportunities in an inner city parish	
	All necessary safeguarding training & understanding of what makes a safe church	
Experience & abilities	Leading a diverse inner city church leadership team & congregation	Experience of a professional field other than parish ministry
	Coaching and encouraging spiritual & leadership development across a diverse congregation including amongst young people	Experience of being a vicar
	Experience of pastoral support to people of all ages and from diverse backgrounds	
	Experience of children's/ youth work	Experience of providing Christian input to a school
	Leading and stimulating Mission Action Planning for Parish ministry	
	Experience of being responsible for	

	a complex organisation and able to manage substantial resources in challenging situations (people, finance, buildings)	
	Project development and delivery	
Skills	Able to preach, teach and lead sensitively, according to the situation so as to guide & encourage others in the development of their faith in Jesus	Excellent numeracy
	Creative in worship	Able to sing confidently and well
	Able to delegate effectively	
	Able to chair and facilitate meetings & discussions effectively and to negotiate difficult conversations well	
	Able to prioritise and help others to prioritise effectively in planning and organising activities and Mission Action Planning	
	Able to organise and lead a team so that events and projects are delivered effectively	
	Both action oriented and reflective	
Personal qualities	Able to build bridges and manage conflict constructively	
	Excellent listener	
	Reflective and committed to lifelong learning & personal development	
	Committed to radical welcome and inclusion and working towards racial justice in line with the St Matthew's statement of inclusion	
	Committed to parish ministry	

Thank you for your interest in the incumbency at Brixton St Matthew with St Jude

Please apply via

<https://www.cofepathways.org/members/modules/job/detail.php?record=8649>

Enquiries about the post are welcome. Please contact

the Archdeacon, Simon Gates via charlie.watkins@southwark.anglican.org

or the Churchwarden at St Matthew's via stmatthewsbrixton@gmail.com

Deadline for applications: Sunday 6th July

Shortlisting: Wednesday 9th July

Parish visit: Saturday 19th July

On this date there is an opportunity for shortlisted candidates to meet parishioners and other local people and to have a look round the parish. Further details will be given to shortlisted candidates.

Interviews: Tuesday 22nd July

This will include a session with a class or part of a class at St Jude's School observed by the head teacher and a short homily to the interview panel. Further details will be provided

