



**Vacancy in the benefice of Sutton (to be the parish of St Barnabas Sutton)**

Statement in relation to the post, the needs of the diocese and the wider interests of the Church. In considering whether to offer this post to any applicant, the Bishop will wish to satisfy himself that the applicant is able and willing to work positively and purposefully with the Diocesan Vision (<http://southwark.anglican.org/downloads/southwarkvision/southwark-vision.pdf>).

**The benefice**

St Barnabas Sutton was incorporated into the Sutton Team Ministry in 2007. A review of the Team Ministry in 2017 led to the recommendation, welcomed by all the PCCs, that the Team be dissolved and re-constituted as a Group Ministry. Each parish within the Team would then have its own minister; this appointment is therefore focused towards the role of incumbent of St Barnabas, on the presumption that the process will continue as agreed.

The congregation of St Barnabas always felt, not without some reason, that they were the poor relation in the Team Ministry, despite a structure which ensured that all the ministry team rotated equally between the churches. The small but committed core group have therefore adopted a somewhat defensive mentality, which has enabled the life of the parish to continue, but not to grow. As is clear from the advert and profile, they recognise that this appointment is an opportunity to move beyond the recent past and to look outwards again in mission. For the new parish priest this will be a key task. But most importantly the congregation of St Barnabas are looking forward to the appointment of a priest who will be their parish priest, in a way that was not possible within the Team framework. As relationships of trust grow, they will be ready to explore the next steps in growth and discipleship.

**The Deanery**

The parish is part of the Sutton Deanery. The Area Dean writes:

The fourteen parishes which make up the Deanery of Sutton represent a diversity of people, churches, experience and outlooks. Our church traditions range from Reform to Liberal Catholic, from Open Evangelical to Forward in Faith and include a variety of other traditions as well. We celebrate all that makes each parish distinctive but also enjoy good relationships with each other. Although we are a mainly suburban deanery, as the demographics of the area change, so the challenges of our churches have changed; Sutton has a more diverse demographic than in former years and is more reflective of the national trend in that the church now has a different place in society than previously. Each parish is facing this new situation in an appropriate way and in Chapter, Synod and the wider deanery life, our deanery is also finding new ways to work together to proclaim the Gospel and serve the people of Sutton. We look forward to welcoming new colleagues who will help our parishes continue to adapt to a changing world and will work collaboratively with colleagues across the deanery and beyond as we continue to explore new ways of being church in Sutton.

## **The needs of the Diocese & the wider church**

All appointments in the Southwark Diocese take place within the context of the diocesan vision. As this unfolds, it is providing a challenge to all parishes and worshipping communities to ensure that their lives and activities are all shaped around the call of the gospel, and our participation in God's mission in the world. The diocese is emphasising the call to growth, both numerical and spiritual, to a renewed partnership between all members of the church in ministry, and to increased collaborative working beyond parish borders, and particularly in deaneries.

## **Finance**

As of 2016, a new system of financial contributions was introduced across the Diocese, called the Parish Support Fund. All parishes and churches are invited to contribute with generosity, and to aim at least to meet their own ministerial costs. St Barnabas has made a pledge of £18,132 for 2019, which has remained unchanged for the last two years. NB: Once the dissolution of the team is complete, indicative costs for St Barnabas will be for a single incumbent benefice with a house for duty incumbent, i.e. (for 2019) £39,200. Any money given over and above the church's own costs enables the diocese to resource ministry in areas of severe deprivation, so in due course I would hope to see St Barnabas ceasing to need support from other parishes.

## **Collaborative Ministry**

I am looking to appoint clergy in this Area who are able to articulate their vision for the mission of the church in the places to which they are called, and who have a vision for the church's growth. In whatever tradition or location, I look to hear from the clergy how they will work together with lay members of the church and with their neighbouring parishes and colleagues. I am looking for people with active and developing spiritual lives who are able to be an example of discipleship to the people of God. I take very seriously my own responsibilities as pastor to the clergy, and will always endeavour to make myself available to support them in their ministry.

+Jonathan Croydon

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