

## PARISH PROFILE : St John the Divine, New Malden

Thank you for your interest in the post of Associate Vicar (Pioneer) at St John's. As wardens, we are delighted to have the opportunity to be able to tell you about the church which we have both attended for over 30 years. As our children were growing up, St John's was an essential part of family life and we are indebted to the support we have received from those around us and trust that any new minister would enjoy that same level of encouragement, belonging and commitment.



*David Greenfield and Linda Kelley*  
District wardens

### Letter from Stephen Kuhrt, Vicar

*Welcome to this profile for St John the Divine, New Malden. I am delighted that you are considering applying for the post of Associate Vicar (Pioneer). St John's is full of both current life and potential for the future and I am very excited about where God is planning to take the church over the next few years. Both recent and imminent developments in the locality mean that all sorts of fresh opportunities for mission are opening up around St John's. Our priority is to appoint a minister committed to breaking*



*new ground and a team player who will lead the church in developing and then executing a dynamic vision for how this might be done. This will also involve building upon the excellent missional work already undertaken by St John's. The post is therefore suitable for both those who have just completed their training curacy and also those with greater experience of parish ministry. We are looking to appoint someone with gifts for mission. The vital things are energy, commitment and vision for the task! What follows is further information*

*about New Malden, the Parish and St John's, largely put together by members of St John's. We hope that this will inform your thinking and encourage you to see the opportunities contained in the post.*

*The Reverend Stephen Kuhrt*  
Vicar

### Summary of the post

St John's has a strong culture of looking outward and we would encourage anyone to apply who is mission-focussed and can help us look with fresh eyes at our approach to embedding ourselves in the local community and sharing God's love. There are many activities currently in place which have potential for further development as well as new opportunities opening up with a proposed new housing development on the site opposite. As such, one and a half days have been set aside as

protected time to focus on missional activities (with support from the Diocese), underpinned by the normal parish work.

Although strictly speaking, this post does not have incumbent status, St John's and Christ Church run largely independently of each other with regular meetings with Stephen Kuhrt offering mutual support.

### **Introduction to St John's**

St John's has a rich inheritance of bible-based evangelical ministry, with teaching aimed at drawing people into faith in God and applying the Bible to everyday life. Our mission statement is,

*St John's members are growing together as Christians and serving the community by practically sharing the love of Jesus. We aim to connect people of all ages and backgrounds to Jesus Christ and one another.*

This draws out what is important to St John's members - growing in our faith, sharing God's love with others and building a community of people who encourage and support each other.

Our vision for the future is

*To be a church family with all ages represented, who feel able to commit some time energy and money to allow us to fulfil our mission for growth, making the best use of our building for both church and community.*



As we have worked on our Mission Action Plan over the last few years, aiming for growth has been an important factor, particularly with a view to attracting young families. However, even though we would love the age profile of our congregation to be younger, we very much value the contribution of our older members. We aim to make the most of our site and premises to draw in and serve local people and, in order to foster

a sense of belonging, we encourage everyone to become involved and contribute in whatever way they can, building a sense of common purpose and responsibility.

St John's has an average Sunday attendance of 60 adults and 10 children. We have 74 on the electoral roll of whom around half are from outside the parish but this is in large part due to the fact that the church is situated on the parish boundary. Most members of the congregation would consider themselves to be New Malden residents and live within walking distance.

### **Mission Action Plan**

As can be seen from the accompanying mission action plan leaflet, we have been focusing over the last five years on five key areas:

We would love to see young families joining us and are keen to encourage the youngsters already within the congregation. The numbers of children in our regular Sunday morning groups are small but we have a core of regular attenders as well as families who visit less frequently. We would also like to develop our long-standing pre-school drop-in sessions (Tots in Tow) creating opportunities for our faith to be shared.



Over the past few years, we have refurbished and updated our interior space to be as welcoming as possible but there is still further potential to maximise the use of the buildings and we would welcome a fresh pair of eyes to help develop this further.

To meet the needs of the older generation within our church and the community, Young at Heart meets twice a month, once with a lunch and activity session and once with a

more intimate group of those who would like to explore their faith. Both sessions have their own regular and committed attenders.

We are the hub church for the local CAP debt centre which is run by a paid centre manager, overseen by a line manager and committee. The catchment area for clients is wide and the team work hard, not only with clients but also to build up support across a network of churches.

Our most recent MAP goal, to offer a welcome and support to the students living close by, has proved to be something of a challenge which has, as yet, produced little fruit and is a key area in which a visionary minister with a missional heart could make a real difference.

### **Premises and location**

St John's grew out of the Christ Church Mission Room which was founded on Kingston Road in 1885 to serve the poorer part of the Parish of New Malden and Coombe. The current building was completed in 1939 and in 1995 was modified at the rear of the nave when a lounge, kitchen and small meeting rooms were constructed to form a church centre, joining the church building to the church hall



Situated on a very busy road into Kingston there is a high volume of passing traffic but relatively low pedestrian footfall. Opposite the church are a number of large commercial outlets (Homebase, Aldi and Matalan) which tend to attract car drivers rather than pedestrians. Nevertheless, there is a bus stop immediately outside the church and the area is very busy when parents are picking up children from King's Oak school and when there are matches at the nearby Cherry Red Records Stadium. (currently the home of AFC Wimbledon). There is also a row of small shops and businesses on the same side of Kingston Road, the other side of the California Road junction. Over the next two years it

is expected that Homebase will close and a developer is currently putting forward a proposal for around 300 new dwellings made up of flats and houses.

To draw the attention of passers-by, we have recently erected new noticeboards and hang banners on the side of the church which can be changed with the seasons. We also run a Street Café twice a month on Saturday mornings (indoor and out) and make full use of the forecourt with our annual Fun Day.

## The Parish

There are two churches within the parish, the main one being Christ Church with Stephen Kuhrt as the Vicar. Under Stephen's leadership, the two churches have established a good independent working relationship, with St John's enjoying as much autonomy as possible. St John's has a District Council, reporting to the Parish Council once a year and notifying them of any large financial outlays but, in all other respects, working independently. The staff team across the Parish meet once a week and share the church school assemblies and end of term services. We also share with Christ Church the administrative support provided by the Parish Office.

## Worship at St John's

Most St John's members would struggle to describe where they sit within the Anglican tradition but to an outsider we might best be described as low church and open evangelical. Robes are not worn.



We have a morning and evening service on Sundays with communion twice a month. Sermon topics usually follow a thematic series and are available on the [website](#). There are currently two lay readers, a Southwark Pastoral Auxiliary (SPA) and a team of lay members who share the leading and preaching.

Music is provided by a committed band of musicians and singers, made up of long-term members as well as young people, with a wide-ranging repertoire extending from the occasional traditional hymn to modern songs.

As part of our Mission Action Plan, we have made some experimental changes to our pattern of morning services of late to encourage our children to feel more part of church worship. We now have the children join the adults for communion, hold more family services in the school holidays rather than once a month and encourage the children to take an active part in the preparation of family services for key celebrations, such as Harvest, Pentecost and Advent.

Evening services are smaller (around 20) but have a steady congregation, many of whom also attend in the morning. Over recent years, different service formats have been introduced, including Praise services for special festivals and a monthly Café style which allows more discussion and informality.

There is a weekly prayer meeting on Wednesday evenings and a number of small groups which meet in people's homes on a weekly or fortnightly basis, each following a different format, looking at a bible study course or listening to talks.

## Links with local churches

St John's plays an active part in New Malden Churches Together, including joining with a community Passion Play in April, and we have very close links with New Malden Baptist Church which also sits on Kingston Road. In August, we share services with NMBC, holding alternate weeks in each other's churches and we have been working together on student outreach. St John's and NMBC members also combine forces for the annual winter night shelter, the foodbank at NMBC and the CAP (Christians Against Poverty) debt centre at St John's.



In common with many churches in the locality, we share our premises with a Korean church, the New London Centre Church which meets on Sunday afternoons and for prayer meetings during the week. Many members of Pastor Hwang's congregation are also St John's members and the two churches worship together on special occasions such as Christmas and Easter.

## Reaching out to the community

Sharing the love of God is a key part of our mission statement and consequently one of our MAP goals has focused on creating a welcoming atmosphere by enhancing the presentation of our buildings. The lounge/reception area has been refurbished and new furniture introduced with the aim of encouraging people to take time to sit and chat. This has been very well-received, as has a shower installed in the accessible toilet for use by night shelter guests.

We have a long-established pre-school drop in session (Tots in Tow) on Monday and Wednesday mornings with around 70 adults and children attending. By making full use of the downstairs space, we are able to offer a range of table-top activities as well as plenty of space to play in the main hall. The sessions are extremely popular and highly-regarded but we are often short of helpers and wish there were more time to sit and chat. We would also like to create opportunities to share our faith.

St John's has particularly close links with Christ Church Primary and King's Oak. Only a short walk away, the children from King's Oak have recently been coming to St John's for visits at key points in the year such as Easter, Harvest and Year 6 transition. We run a Street Café on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays of each month which attracts regular visitors as well as providing an opportunity to catch up with local people who are just passing or start up conversations with people at the bus stop. No charge is made and the



emphasis is on taking time to talk. At the same time we operate as an outreach for a local community bank (currently Boom Credit Union).

The further benefit of upgrading the look of the premises is that it increases our lettings potential. We have a long-term booking on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month by a Hungarian School which encourages ex-pats to share their language and culture with their children and often hire out the hall for children's parties.

### Reaching out to those in need

St John's has a strong desire to reach out to those in need. We have been established as a CAP (Christians Against Poverty) debt centre since 2014 with a paid manager (3 days a week).



We are long-term supporters of KCAH (Kingston Churches action against Homelessness) and the annual temporary Kingston winter night shelter and the more long-term Joel project.

A team also pay regular visits to Abbeyfield, the local old people's home and in recognition of loneliness amongst older people isolated in their homes, the Young at Heart group was set up some years ago and is now well established.

### Reaching out to local students

Since a students' accommodation block has been built on Kingston Road, we have been working hard (in conjunction with a team from New Malden Baptist Church (NMBC)) to try out a number of initiatives to engage with the students including regular church lunches, a Cookery course and a CAP money course. So far our interaction with the students has been limited but an unexpected spin-off has been the popularity of the monthly church lunches with existing members of the congregation which has proved a great way to get to know each other. (website: [www.studentskingstonroadnm.com](http://www.studentskingstonroadnm.com) ; Facebook page: Students Kingston Road NM )

### Supporting and encouraging each other

To support the Associate Vicar in looking after the pastoral needs of the church family, there is a small group which meets regularly to share concerns, pray and provide support to those in need, including taking out communion to those who can no longer come to church. A Keep fit group meets on a Monday evening, led by one of the church members providing the opportunity for people from the congregation and others with whom we have links, to support and challenge each other with some light exercise.



A number of our more creative members enjoy expressing their faith through needlework and have created banners for the front of church as well as pictures for the lounge. Not only do they draw a great deal of pleasure from creating them but they are also an encouragement to those who see them.

### **Web presence**

In recent years we have developed our own [website](#) and created our own Facebook page to publicise events (St John's New Malden).

### **Reaching out to the world**

Together with Christ Church, St John's has a long history of supporting overseas mission. In recent times we have focused on mission partners with whom we have a particular connection - **Jeremy Nash & Ana van Brakel (Mission Africa)**, **Mercy Teete (International Teams)** and **Phil & Susanne Rugg (Arab World Media)** There is a mission support group which keeps in touch with them and shares their news and needs with the congregation.

### **DCC and lay readers**

The Associate Vicar is assisted by two lay readers (David Greenfield and Roger Parham) and Dave Pamphilon who is a SPA (Southwark Pastoral Auxiliary). Membership of the DCC has remained steady for the last few years and the group have developed a very good working relationship. In order to make the district wardens' roles less onerous, aspects of the role are shared by a wider team of people.



### **Finance**

Through God's blessing, our finances are in a satisfactory position. We budget carefully to keep within our means and have a three month working reserve. Over the last year we have asked for gifts to cover additional outlays on the church property and the Associate Vicar's house to which the congregation's response was very encouraging. We have a finance team of three working together rather than just a treasurer and they work closely with the treasurer at Christ Church to combine the two sets of accounts into one Parish account for presentation to the auditor. We were delighted with the outcome of the most recent Quinquennial survey, in 2018, which reported that the church premises were well-cared for and listed only a small number of minor repairs to be made over the next five years.

## Clergy accommodation (2 California Road)

The clergy accommodation was purchased by the parish and extended in the 1980s and conveniently sits adjacent to the church. On the ground floor there is a large reception room which can be subdivided, a study, a kitchen, utility room and a bathroom with shower (recently up-graded). Upstairs there are three good sized bedrooms and one smaller one. During the period of vacancy, the house is being re-decorated and new flooring installed in the kitchen. There is space for car parking and a small garden to the rear which offers privacy from the road.

## The local area

New Malden is well placed. It is primarily a commuter town with good rail and road links, with easy access to central London and the beautiful Surrey countryside. The A3 runs along its eastern



boundary, curving around the parish before heading southwest towards Guildford. Junctions 9 and 10 of the M25 are only 10 minutes away. It is 23 minutes by train to Waterloo, with six trains per hour. New Malden has a thriving high street with established High Street names such as Waitrose, Wilko, WH Smith and Boots mingling with several Korean businesses, shops, travel agents and restaurants. It also has a variety of restaurants and cafes, a leisure

centre and swimming pool. There are a number of children's parks and wider open spaces including Richmond Park, Bushey Park, Wimbledon Common and the river Thames within easy reach for running, walking, riding and cycling. Kingston is a historic market town, the area's main shopping centre and offers its own Rose theatre, multi-screen cinema, leisure centre, gyms, university, art gallery and museum as well as a thriving nightlife with restaurants, clubs and bars, some alongside the river Thames. For shopping and entertainment there is also Wimbledon and Richmond. Several bus routes run through New Malden and final destinations include Wimbledon, Kingston, Tooting, Mitcham, Tolworth, Putney, Surbiton, Croydon and Heathrow. A few miles away is Chessington World of Adventures, a popular theme park.

Kingston Borough is well-served by very good schools, both at primary and secondary level, - see below for a full list.

New Malden is a multi-ethnic community and according to the local authority website, "is thought to be home to the largest Korean population in Europe". St John's congregation now contains a significant minority of Koreans.

Situated on the parish boundary with St Peter's, Norbiton which has historically been an area of high deprivation, the immediate area around St John's has a mix of social housing and comparatively low cost homes attractive to first-time buyers. This type of housing brings with it some long-term problems of mental health and social deprivation which can carry on through generations as well as attracting aspiring young couples or families

## More details about the post

### *The Vision for the future of St John's*

Moving forward, the diocesan vision for St John's is to build on these foundations and explore further ways in which mission to the local area can be developed. We are seeking to fill the post of Associate Vicar (Pioneer) with someone who has the gifts that will fit this brief and lead St John's in embedding itself within the local community.



### *Key requirements*

The task of leading St John's in expressing their discipleship in outreach to the local community will require:

- A pioneering and imaginative missional minister with a heart for the gospel and the skills to create teams and develop fresh forms of mission that will engage with those who are 'unchurched'. We would expect the minister to spend 1 – 1 ½ days per week on missional activities
- An engaging leader and team player committed to working in partnership with the members of St John's, the Vicar of Christ Church and other churches and their leaders in the local area
- An inspiring preacher and teacher who is able to equip the members of St John's for local mission
- A caring pastor who is committed to the care and nurture of both older and newer members of St John's, as well as those reached as a result of missional endeavour
- A prayerful minister willing to listen to both God and others in leading St John's forward

### *Key Relationships*

- Leadership of St John's through oversight of its services and church life and chairing of its District Church Council (DCC)
- Being part of a supportive ministry team through a weekly staff meeting at Christ Church on Tuesday mornings and delivering assemblies at Christ Church Primary School on Wednesday mornings once every three weeks in term time.
- Regular one-to-one meetings with the Vicar of Christ Church
- Continued close partnership with New Malden Baptist Church and the potential development of closer missional relationships with other local churches
- Support from the Diocese through the Dean of Fresh Expressions

### *Specific Missional Requirements*

The post will require the further development and implementation of an integrated missional strategy. This will include working with supporting, encouraging and developing the current lay leadership of our existing missional groups:

- The two weekday Toddler groups
- Young at Heart
- The Street Café

- The CAP Debt Centre
- The Winter Night Shelter
- The monthly service at the nearby Abbeyfield care home

In addition, this strategy looks to develop pioneering new worshipping communities/ missions. With housing developments and changes in the area, there are a number of key opportunities to explore which might include:

- *Development of a Missional Strategy for further involvement with King's Oak Primary School (just outside the Parish boundaries but within St John's sphere of influence through an agreement with the neighbouring Parish of St Peter's, Norbiton)*
- *Development of a Missional Strategy for responding to the major new housing development on the opposite side of Kingston Road (300 new dwellings) currently in the planning phase, including possible work with the developers on St John's role in this community.*
- *Development of a Missional Strategy for further engagement with local student halls of residence*

The hope is that the development of a strategic approach to one or more of these missional objectives could lead to a Fresh Expression of Church led by the Associate Vicar (Pioneer).

When the congregation of St John's were asked what they would be looking for in a new minister they came up with the following attributes : forward thinking, lively, good with people, convinced of their call to St John's, creative at outreach, honest, spiritual, encouraging, inspiring, Bible-based, a good listener, possessing a good sense of humour, aware of both young and old in the congregation, possessing empathy, open to the movement of the Holy Spirit and able to maintain and develop links with the local community.

In return, St John's would offer a new minister a welcoming, supportive congregation who are very keen to live out the gospel of Christ within their community. St John's provides an open, nurturing environment in which everyone is keen to see others grow in their faith and develop their ministry. There is a great 'can do' attitude and a willingness to be creative in finding ways of presenting the gospel in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In conclusion, may we invite you to prayerfully consider applying to join us in this work. If you would like an informal discussion to find out more about the post, please contact the Vicar, Stephen Kuhrt.

## **Useful websites**

### ***Local churches and organisations mentioned above***

[Christ Church](#)

[NMBC](#)

[CAP \(Christians against Poverty\)](#)

[KCAH](#)

[Joel](#)

### ***Local primary schools***

[Christ Church New Malden Primary](#)

[Kings Oak](#)

[Burlington Infants' School](#)  
[Burlington Junior School](#)  
[Coombe Hill Infants' School](#)  
[Coombe Hill Junior School](#)  
[Corpus Christi](#)

***Local secondary schools***

[Coombe Girls' School](#)  
[Coombe Boys' School](#)  
[Hollyfield School](#)  
[Kingston academy](#)  
[Richard Challoner](#)  
[Tiffin Girls' School](#)  
[Tiffin School](#)

***Local independent schools***

[Kingston Grammar](#)  
[Surbiton High](#)  
[The Study](#)  
[Westbury House](#)