PARISH OF SAINT STEPHEN WITH SAINT MARK LEWISHAM
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INTRODUCTION

The Parish of St Stephen with St Mark is an Anglican Parish in the Catholic tradition in Lewisham, South East London.

The parish has become vacant because of the departure of the Vicar for a new incumbency. Our last vicar was the Parish Priest for over six years, during which time the church community has benefitted from the enthusiasm with which he has worked, particularly at maintaining this thriving Parish.

The Parish of St Stephen with St Mark Lewisham consists of one church, the Grade 2 Listed church of St Stephen. (Saint Mark’s was demolished some time ago). St Stephen’s church was designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott and it was built for Catholic worship in the Church of England, a tradition that continues to this day and one which the congregation embraces. The imposing building is situated at the point of the London wide transport hub in Lewisham and is richly endowed with artefacts bearing testimony to the worshippers who, over 150 years, have worshipped here. The history of the parish can be found in the relevant section of this profile.

THE FUTURE

The Parish now seeks to find its next Parish priest, who can continue to build on the foundations of the past. We want to continue to be a welcoming Anglo Catholic church for the future. We are a parish of The Society. We are looking for a man of prayer who has the Mass and daily office at the centre of his life, who is a member of Forward in Faith and The Society and preferably SSC. We would like a pastor committed to the people, understanding our differing needs, willing to encourage, nurture and deepen us and others in our Catholic faith. We are the Eucharistic community in this part of Lewisham and enjoy following the heritage of our forebears and being a valued part of the community. The PCC believe that this post would be suitable for, and would accept, a priest for whom this is a post of first responsibility. However, some of the congregation would prefer a more experienced priest.
THE LOCALITY OF THE PARISH

The Parish is located south of the Thames in South East London, and south of Blackheath and Greenwich. It is in the town centre of Lewisham and close by the stations and bus interchange. The rail and bus links are extensive.

INTRODUCTION TO LEWISHAM

Stretching from the banks of the Thames in the north, to the borders of Bromley in the south, the 13.4 square miles of the London Borough of Lewisham encompass diverse communities, speaking over 170 languages. Lewisham is one of the greenest parts of South East London with over a fifth of the borough being parkland or open spaces. Near the church lies Lewisham town centre, with a medium sized shopping precinct which offers retail outlets geared to all ages and needs together with ethnic food outlets as well as the usual caffeine stop-offs! The ability to shop is increased with the well-known street market.

Recently the council has embarked on the redevelopment of the area around Lewisham Station including several new tall residential blocks. This combines with Lewisham’s residential neighbourhoods and newly created roadway system to create a suburban environment which gives all the aspects required for commerce and entertainment.

A very short distance away is the village of Blackheath, with its high-class restaurants and food shops catering for the gourmet cooks. Crossing the expanse of the Heath will bring you via Greenwich Park down into Royal Greenwich with the Cutty Sark and a trip upriver and more well-known eating places. The whole place is one of the most interesting and enjoyable corners of London, which accounts for the desire to live here.

As mentioned above a 15 year & £375M redevelopment of Lewisham is underway. The project is due to be completed in 2021 and includes many new flats. This will increase substantially the population of the parish, with the disadvantage that many are occupied on short term lets.

The transport hub is one of the widest ranging in London, with the DLR, Southern and Overground trains and buses reaching as far as Camden Town. Lewisham’s population of about 300,000 is growing faster than the general population and is relatively young with one in four residents under the age of 19. The most common religion in the 2001 census was Christianity, with the deeply felt Anglo-Catholic faith of the African and Caribbean people finding its home in the Church built for this voice to be heard. The Church has stood here for over 150 years and is still doing the work of God, and with your help will continue to do so.
PARISH HISTORY

St Stephen’s Church is built in the Gothic Style of the early Thirteenth Century. Designed by the famous architect Sir Gilbert Scott, it was intended to have a majestic spire above the vestry. Unfortunately, the London shale proved to be unequal to carrying this weight and in consequence the building has a slightly uneven look.

Notwithstanding this, it remains a solid historic emblem of Christianity in Lewisham and is, as one might expect, a Grade Two Listed building.

The Church came into being as a result of the generosity of the Revd. Septimus Russell Davies, an Assistant Priest at St Margaret’s in Lee. He had long felt the need for a new church serving the people of the Loampit Vale district of North Lewisham and on inheriting a large sum of money he commissioned the building of such a church. The site was given by the Earl of St Germans and in May 1863 the foundation stone was laid. With commendable good sense the then Bishop of London, the Right Revd. Archibald Tait, pointed out in his consecration address how fitting it was that the first incumbent should be the Revd. Septimus Davies who had so generously caused it to be built.

Unfortunately, The Revd. Davies was compelled to resign because of ill health and in 1868 the Assistant Priest, The Revd. Rhodes Bristow, was appointed Incumbent. Thus, began the very strong tradition of Anglo-Catholic worship which, as befits a church under the Patronage of Keble College, Oxford, is so much at the heart of St Stephen’s Christian community.

Fr Bristow introduced the daily Eucharist and separated the Eucharist on Sunday from the lengthy Choral Matins which had preceded it up to now. His belief that the Eucharist is the most important celebration for a Sunday, and not just an add-on to a sung Matins, brought him into conflict with not only the congregation but also with the current Bishop when the congregation complained. The Bishop, however, did not intervene and left Fr Bristow to weather the storm.

Thus, Fr Rhodes Bristow persisted and the realisation of the supreme importance of the Eucharist as foremost among the services of the church became embedded in the worship at St Stephen’s. In 1897, after thirty years as Incumbent, he left to become a Canon but remained a loyal and familiar presence in the parish when need arose. When he died in 1914 the magnificent rood screen which dominates the interior of the building was erected as a tribute to a man who more than anyone established the catholic tradition at St Stephen’s.
In common with many areas of London, St Stephen’s did not escape the bombs and after the war a fund was raised to augment the War Damage Grant to repair the destruction done to the East End stained glass windows and the roof. The work started in 1950 and began on the roof. In 1954, 14 years after the damage occurred, the stained-glass windows in the Chancel and the Lady Chapel were replaced to a design by Mr. J E Nuttgens. Those in the Chancel depict the work of Redemption, as in the originals, and the windows in the Lady Chapel portray three events in the life of the Virgin Mother.

The West End Gable has for over 150 years been embellished with a stone Martyr’s Cross, but time and the weather have finally proved too much and in December 2018 it was considered a danger and brought down. As part of the resulting necessary renovation of the west end wall there has been erected a facsimile of the original fashioned to the same design and in the same stone.
THE CHURCH

IMAGES OF ST STEPHEN’S LEWISHAM
The building is spacious with bench pews in the nave and wide side aisles allowing the positioning of extra seating for special events. On the right side of the Chancel there is the Lady Chapel. This was ornately furnished during the 1920’s with memorial gifts, including the altar and the reredos, the aumbry, the beautiful memorial panels lining the walls and finally the elegant statue of Our Lady and her Blessed Child in white alabaster, adorned with touches of blue and gold. This chapel is particularly used as a place of private prayer as the Blessed Sacrament is reserved here. The chapel on the left is dedicated to St Mark and is used for smaller congregations. Both chapels are regularly used for said Mass.

The Chancel has a marble floor with two steps elevating the High Altar on the East wall. Above are the three stained glass windows by Nuttgens depicting the Redemption. A magnificent Reredos of the Last Supper enhances the Altar. A marble pedestal Altar stands in the foreground of the Chancel for the celebration of Mass. A dwarf screen in bronze with medallions depicting emblems of the Passion in silhouette runs along the front of the Chancel. Directly above this is the rood screen presented by the congregation in memory of Fr Rhodes Bristow, as a tribute to the man who embedded the catholic tradition at St Stephen’s Church.

St Stephen has his place on the pillar to the right of the Chancel steps and other statues and icons decorate the church, all given as memorials. A set of alabaster Stations of the Cross adorn the side walls of the building. St Stephen’s Church prides itself on having a truly splendid collection of vestments and silverware.

The congregation of St Stephen’s Church greatly values the ceremony attached to the Feast days and responds to a liturgy clothed and celebrated in a style which they feel is fitting to the glory of their Lord.
OUR WORSHIPPING LIFE

On Sundays there is an 8am Low Mass and a 10am Parish Mass. Currently we also celebrate Mass on Monday, at 9.30 am, Wednesday at 12.15, (sometimes with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament for an hour beforehand), on Friday at 12.15 and Saturday at 10am. There is a choral evensong at 5pm on the last Sunday of the month, at which food and fellowship are shared.

We have an enthusiastic Junior Church and an equally busy branch of the Mothers’ Union. There is a flourishing Walsingham Cell whose members celebrate a monthly mass and are very regular attendees at the Shrine, both on day pilgrimages and longer retreats.

We celebrate the Church Calendar with enthusiasm and reverence, never stinting on the liturgy, and find that the extensive forecourt at the West End is ideal for spreading ourselves into the community, especially for the Easter New Fire! The Anglo-Catholic core of our belief is deep, and we have always immersed ourselves in it. We anticipate that our new Priest will enjoy leading us in these sacramental celebrations.

We are blessed with a long standing and knowledgeable organist, who has the joy and help of a group of professional singers. This choir is self-funded, for which we are doubly grateful.

Our young Altar servers have graduated from our Junior Church and have been well trained by their experienced fellows. They are a credit to the church.

We have a fledgling project called “Little Saints”, with songs and stories, which caters for 0 – 5 year olds, along with parents and carers. This project is supported by the Young and Smart Nursery.

We conduct a monthly service for the residents of Glebe Court, a local home for people with differing types of Dementia.

Because of its prominent position and interesting history, St Stephen’s Church is on the list of places to see on a visit to Lewisham! It is very good to see the visitor’s pleasure at discovering the inside.
OCCASIONAL OFFICES

Baptisms are usually integrated into the Sunday Mass in Church. Banns are regularly read. The last wedding in church was in October 2016. However, a wedding has recently been booked for June 2020. We have around seven funerals a year in Church and around 25 in the local crematoriums. There are very good relations with the local undertakers.

OUR COMMUNITY LIFE

There is a strong tradition of fellowship at St Stephen’s that plays an important role in sustaining the Church; we come together in prayer, work and leisure. We celebrate festivals throughout the Church Year with food and drink. Shared lunches have become a strong feature of our fellowship.

During the past six years there have been pilgrimages to holy sites, including Walking in the Footsteps of St Paul in Malta, a visit to Rome including a blessing from the Holy Father and a tour of the Holy Land. Both day and overnight trips to Walsingham are routine as a Walsingham Cell is active in the congregation.

A branch of the Mothers’ Union is also growing among the community. We had an extremely successful Youth Pilgrimage to Lourdes. We have a healthy attitude to fund raising which has included a yearly pantomime, both Summer and Winter Fairs, which together with concerts and a quiz night or two have contributed to the cost of an extensive renovation of the West Gable and a replica of the stone cross, by the stone mason Adrian Powell, to take the place of the eroded original. We are proud of our Listed Building status and the community atmosphere it projects. No new major works are envisaged at this time; however, there are several other items that will need to be addressed over the coming years.
We have always had strong links with our Church of England primary school, and these have become stronger with the parish priest’s involvement with the Faith Team at St Stephen’s School. Please see the Headmistress’s statement. The school is particularly anxious that this relationship should continue to provide the regular input into the school’s Christian heritage.

The Parish has a long tradition of help with the homeless and needy and regularly donates to the Food Bank. We also keep a supply of information in the church for immediate practical help when needed.

We are very involved with the East Lewisham Deanery Synod (the secretary is a St Stephen’s parishioner), also contributing three lay members.

We enjoy good relationships with other Society parishes and regularly host events. We have strengthened our ties with these parishes and are dedicated to supporting the Society and its aims and beliefs.

We are responsible to the Diocese of Southwark and take this seriously, with the Incumbent and parish contributing to the work of the Diocese. We are aware that we have an excellent relationship with the Diocese and are looking to this continuing. We share the mission statement of the Diocese and are keen to deepen the faith of the congregation and grow the size of the congregation in line with the population growth in the local community.
The congregation is racially diverse with the vast majority having a Caribbean or African background. The people come from many different walks of life.

The Electoral Roll currently stands at 110. Relatively few of our Sunday congregation live in the parish, (especially with closeness of parish boundaries to the church) but most of the rest live within five miles of St. Stephen’s.

At present we are fortunate to have the services of additional clergy on a regular basis. We also have authorised Lay Ministers of Communion who assist at the Sunday Mass and take communion to the housebound. Lesson readers and intercessors come from a wide range of congregation members.

The Junior Church meets in the Church Hall and joins the Mass during the Eucharistic Prayer. They work on the Gospel of the day with the bible, discussion and worksheets. On occasion, the Juniors will attend the entire Mass under supervision using age related Mass books. The attendance numbers each week fluctuate between 5 and 14.

We have a group of teenage servers who are regularly learning new skills. They have been recruited from the Junior Church and are showing an impressive understanding and ability for the task.

Music is an important part of our worship. We are blessed with an excellent organist who has played at the church for over twenty years. We also have the joy of the excellent choir which consists of trained professional vocalists. The choir is self-funded, for which we are doubly grateful. St Stephen’s offers a monthly Choral Evensong, which is followed by “Food & Fellowship” This is attracting people who worship elsewhere but join St Stephen’s for the music and fellowship.
THE PARISH CLERGY

The Vicar is supported by the Honorary Assistant Curate and three retired priests, who give unstintingly of their time and have played an active and vital role in our worship and community outreach, more so during the interregnum.

Fr Peter Hudson SSC came to St Stephen’s in 2007 and has been Honorary Assistant Curate since then. He is the Forward in Faith Chaplain at The English Chapel, Christ The King Gordon Square WC1H 0AG, where he has an active ministry with the students and staff of the University of London, as well as members of Forward in Faith. He is also the temporary Administrative Assistant for Forward in Faith. Fr Peter continues to lead the ministry to Glebe Court, the local home for people with dementia. Fr Peter also provides cover for parishes which are without a priest.

Fr Francis Gardom has been at St Stephen’s for over 50 years: firstly, as Assistant Curate under Fr John Davidson in 1968, then under Fr Michael Wright. In 1976 he became Hon. Assistant Curate in the parish and has continued to work here ever since. He has five sons and a large ‘Extended Family’. He continues to be very active, both inside the Parish and beyond, including The Death Café, a monthly bereavement group, celebrates mass regularly (currently Monday morning) and administers the host when required to do so. He has made St Stephen’s his “spiritual home”.

Fr Derek White MBE is a retired priest (former Church Army and a Chaplain to the homeless in London.) He assists with distribution of Holy Communion, and currently sings The Angelus at the parish mass on Sundays, when required. He also assists at mass if needed. He currently celebrates the Friday mass.

Fr Stephen Wilson SSC served in the stipendiary ministry 1979-2015 in the London and Canterbury dioceses. Since then he has been living in south London, with permission to officiate at St Stephen’s and other parishes in the Southwark diocese needing occasional Sunday cover. He is married with two grown-up sons and twin granddaughters (now aged three). He has academic interests relating to his original trainings in philosophy (Newcastle University), and theology (Emmanuel and Westcott House, Cambridge), and he has published several articles within those areas since ceasing stipendiary ministry.
A STATEMENT FROM THE PARISH CLERGY

We look forward to a new parish priest so that we can continue the work of the parish together. We would expect any priest coming to St Stephen’s to work collaboratively and with understanding. He should also be aware that whilst there are four assistant clergy, all of us have health problems and many other demands upon our time, so we are not four full time clergy!

FR PETER WRITES

I came to Stephen’s as Honorary Assistant Curate in 2007 and like so many stayed! It has been a privilege to work in this parish, which is multicultural. Where you never quite know what you will be doing next. The people are a warm, friendly and supportive collection of people who care deeply about one another and their clergy. The future poses challenges with many new developments within the parish and the regeneration of Lewisham itself; the process has started, but there is much work still to do. The church building is sound and well cared for although further work will need to be done in the not too distant future. Work will need to be undertaken to ensure that the church can move forward and have the facilities that it needs. We are all keen to see the church develop, especially in terms of outreach to the local community. The people generally have a good biblical background and love the church. They are a spiritual people and they have a range of opinions on many subjects but come together in the worship and mission of the church. I think that what they are looking for and want is a priest to care for and love them and to work with them. If you are prepared to work hard, to preach and teach, to listen and learn, and above all love the people of God, then this could be a very rewarding position for you.

FR STEPHEN WRITES

St Stephen’s is spiritual home to a lively and diverse congregation and its clergy. My hope is that it will (1) continue in its strong tradition of enabling its people to ‘worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness’ (2) continue to grow in the strength of its witness and service to the local community.

FR FRANCIS WRITES

St Stephen’s owes its considerable success over the years by combining a steadfast loyalty to its Catholic Tradition with an ability both to inspire and encourage its Clergy and Laity to develop their original ideas, and to ‘test them out’ in practice.

In my own case these have ranged from being a Special Constable in Lewisham, to running a small typesetting business in the Parish. Many others at St Stephen have had equally good (or better!) ideas, and so I have seen my role being always to support and encourage others to bring their own ‘inspirations’ to fruition.

This willingness on the part of Clergy and Laity to value the ideas of those who have suggested them has, in my opinion, succeeded in transforming the Church of St Stephen and St Mark, Lewisham from an ‘ordinary’ run-of-the-mill ‘High Church’ parish (like it was 50 years ago), into an extra-ordinary one – by the willingness of all involved to tolerate change, but without, at the same time, losing sight of our Christian duty: namely, to enable others, beside ourselves, to “glorify God, and enjoy Him for ever”.

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ST STEPHEN’S C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

OVERVIEW

St Stephen's Church of England Primary School is a Voluntary Aided school for children aged 5 to 11 with a Nursery. It is unusual as the school is not within the parish.

This is due to historic reasons in that the original school became unusable and a deal was done between the Local Authority, Diocese and Parish to use an existing local authority school that was no longer in use. The school is therefore in the neighbouring Parish of St John’s Lewisham (The Ravensbourne Team Ministry).

St Stephen’s is a high achieving, dynamic and creative school, with a strong Christian ethos. The Parish enjoys an excellent relationship with the school, with the incumbent taking on the role of Vice Chair of the Governing Body. The previous Parish Priest was very involved with the teaching and practice of religious worship and was instrumental in the school’s SIAMS inspection in March 2018 when the school was awarded Outstanding. He was a regular weekly visitor to the school and the staff are looking to the next priest to maintain the same ties and involvement.

THE HEAD TEACHER WRITES

“St. Stephen’s is a thriving one-form entry Primary School with children from the ages of three to eleven years old. The school is recognised as having a very strong Christian ethos rooted in Christian values and principles. Ofsted (March 2017) reported that the school continued to be good and that the parents were extremely positive about the school. We strive to ensure all pupils at St. Stephen’s have experiences enabling them to know God for themselves and leave the school prepared for the life ahead. This is reflected in our school mission statement.

Every member of our school family can stand as spiritual, confident, positive individuals, rooted in Christian values, empowered to face life’s challenges and reach their full potential.
Our five school values; Respect, Honesty, Self-control, Kindness and Perseverance, underpin all we do at the school. Our recent Ofsted commented on the excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural opportunities provided by the school. We have a very close relationship with St. Stephen’s Church.

We believe that at the heart of the Church’s mission is the partnership between church and school. We recognise that the school and church can join as one in serving each other and the wider community. We expect the incumbent to take an active role in developing positive and fruitful relationships with pupils, staff and parents. We see this role being developed through the leading of worship, visiting classes on a regular basis, being involved in the varied experiences and opportunities open to pupils and developing the spiritual freedom that is evident in our collective worship. Traditionally the incumbent has taken an ex-officio position on the Governing Body.”

Miss Frances Holland – Head Teacher
**THE PARISH HALL**

The Parish Hall is behind the vicarage and incorporates the basement of the vicarage (there is no access to the house). There are two small rooms and the usual offices in the basement and on the ground floor there is a large room and a kitchen. The small rooms are used for the Junior Church and the large room for any weekend function such as Parish lunches, Harvest and Mothers’ Union occasional events.

During the weekdays it is in full time use as a day nursery called “Young & Smart”. The income from this enterprise is an essential addition to our finances and is augmented by a Pentecostal church on Sundays. It is also used as a Polling Station when needed. These sessions are not a problem to arrange but a part time Hall Manager would probably assist in making it smoother. Consideration will need to be given to the redevelopment of the Parish hall in due time.
THE VICARAGE

The vicarage (built by parish subscription at the time) is situated behind the church and is a substantial four storey Victorian home, retaining many original features including some fireplaces.

The house has a study, WC, living room, dining room and kitchen on the ground floor (up eight stone steps). On the first floor are three bedrooms; the last two vicars used one of these rooms as their own personal living space, rather than as a bedroom; the bathroom is situated on this floor together with a walk-in shower room. On the next floor are a further five rooms, one of which has been used as an additional kitchen. There is also a fully boarded loft accessed by a loft ladder. There is a narrow but long “courtyard” garden at the rear of the property. The incumbent before last had lived here for thirty three years. A great deal of work was undertaken to overhaul and modernise the vicarage before the previous incumbent’s arrival, as the PCC were resolved that they wished their Priest to live in the vicarage, and the former parish priest was agreeable, so the building is now up to date. However, it could benefit from some interior decoration, and work to the garden.

The building has a Closed-Circuit Camera on the outside, a video entry phone and alarm.
FINANCE

St Stephen’s is not an affluent Parish. Nevertheless, over the last 10 years, our day to day receipts have exceeded our expenditures and we have no arrears of Quota/Parish Fund share to the Diocese. Our 2018 financial results are summarised on the next page.

EXCEPTIONAL EXPENDITURE:

The major items of exceptional expenditure over the five years 2014 to 2018 were:

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>New heating system for Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Renovation of Rainwater goods</td>
<td>£7,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Replastering of Chancel Arch</td>
<td>£46,000</td>
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<td>2016/2018</td>
<td>Restoration of West Gable Stonework and replacement of the Martyrs Cross</td>
<td>£109,000</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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Funded By:

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<td>Grants</td>
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<td>VAT Refunds (LPWS)</td>
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<td>Reduction in Bank Balance</td>
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<td>Loan from Diocese Repayable over 4 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donations from Fundraising</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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## ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH

### SUMMARY ACCOUNTS 2018 £000

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<th>Budget 2018</th>
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<td>Hall, Forecourt Stalls</td>
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<td>Tax Refunds</td>
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<td>Fundraising</td>
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<td>Other eg Parochial Fees, Donations</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>84.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>83.5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Day to Day Payments** |          |          |
| Parish Share to Diocese  | 36.9      | 36.9      |
| Other payments to Diocese| 1.4       | 1.7       |
| Gas,Electricity, Insurance etc | 16.8      | 16.2      |
| Maintenance              | 6.9        | 6.5        |
| Other Expenses            | 13.8       | 13.3       |
| **Total**                | **75.8**   | **74.6**   |

| **One-off & Restricted** |          |          |
| Income:                 |          |          |
| Choir                   | 7.2       |            |
| Building Fund           | 6.4       |            |
| Mission & Pilgrimage    | 3.4       |            |
| Sound System            | 3.8       |            |
| Other                   | 6.4       |            |
| **Total Income**        | **27.2**  |            |
| Loan from Diocese(net of repayments) | 19.6     | 46.8       |
| **Net One-off & Restricted** | -95.9     |            |

| **Movement in Bank Balance** |          |          |
| Bank Balance at 1.1.18      | 77.5      |            |
| Surplus in Day to Day Receipts & Payments | 8.9       |            |
| Net One-off & Restricted Expenditure | -49.1     |            |
| Bank Balance at 31.12.18 Note 2 | 37.3      |            |

Note 1 A further £2527 was received in January 2019.
Note 2 £17,798 of the Closing Bank Balance is applicable to Restricted Funds (excluding £2,919 tax refund received in early January 2019) The balance of £20,000 is for Unrestricted Funds
THE PARISH MISSION ACTION PLAN

SEEKING TO BUILD THE KINGDOM OF GOD TOGETHER IN FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE, TRUSTING ALL THINGS TO CHRIST OUR LORD.

It is clear that as a parish we face a number of challenges: the clearest of these is maintaining our life in a rapidly changing Lewisham. There is some indication that we have been adversely affected by the building work taking place around us. This new development we hope will offer us new opportunities but accessing the new housing may be difficult. We face challenges that are financial as well as physical in encouraging new people to join us as well as focusing on the upkeep of our church and hall.

AREAS FOR MISSION FOCUS:

➢ Advance notice of dates/times of services.
➢ Funerals - how can we relate better to funeral families and encourage them to worship with us?
➢ List of people willing to act as stewards and a list of things that need doing, e.g. collection bags/opening and closing church.
➢ For Baptisms it would be useful to produce a leaflet for parents with useful information.
➢ Baptisms - how can we increase the number of these and ensure that all are properly prepared?
➢ Fresh Expressions - we have the Death Café – how might we reach out further?
➢ Young people and young families.
➢ Community Outreach – how can we use the community centres, schools etc in our parish?

PRACTICALITIES:

- Building – to renovate the plaster work in church.
- Sound system – to ensure we obtain a new sound system or that the current one works effectively. A sound engineer was required to operate the sound system during services. It would be useful to speak to other churches, e.g. St Mary’s or St John the Divine, Kennington regarding their sound systems.
- Money – how do we ensure financial security - teaching on giving is needed.
- Teaching - more teaching days and events about the faith – should we run an Alpha Course?
- Advertising - we have an online presence – how do we get the message across to people in flats etc... We will have a Holy Week Banner.
- Open Church - after the success of Pax Christi icon we will have church open for two weekends in 2016 – we need proper literature and advertising.
- Signs - a Church Open Sign.
- Music – Continue work of the choir, encourage concerts, Junior choir.
- Junior Church - Holiday clubs, events?
- Information - Leaflets for Baptism, Wedding and Funeral Families.
- PCC – to encourage cohesion and arrange a PCC awayday with Diocesan Secretary Ruth Martin.
- First Aider - It was identified that St Stephen’s needed a First Aider. Pamela Bent agreed to take on the role.
- Transport – It was agreed that transport should be provided to and from church for those who need it. Some members of the PCC said they had taken a Community Transport Service test in the past with this in mind, but nothing had been taken forward.

(March 2016 to be reviewed in five years)
JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE

Vicar.

WHERE

The Parish of Saint Stephen with Saint Mark Lewisham, in the London Borough of Lewisham, the Deanery of East Lewisham, the Archdeaconry of Lewisham and Greenwich and the Diocese of Southwark. A Parish of The Society.

PURPOSE OF THE JOB

The post holder will be expected to:

▪ Support the congregation in their desire to uphold and deepen the catholic faith as a church of The Society, by disseminating the catholic teaching of the faith through soundly based scriptural preaching and catholic liturgy, including music. Maintain and build upon the established traditions of the church and congregation, understanding their needs and expanding and strengthening their involvement.

▪ Ensure that Mass is normally celebrated daily and twice on Sundays and Holy Days.

▪ Organise regular visits for the sick, and those unable to attend Mass, particularly for the administration of the Holy Sacrament.

▪ Work with the Churchwardens and other members of the PCC and to regard attendance at meetings of Parochial Church Council as a priority.

▪ Support and develop the social life of the parish and congregation with the PCC and churchwardens, with advice and help from the parishioners.

▪ Support young people in the Church and encourage their involvement in the Church, whether at Mass or other activities. Promote the Junior Church and support those who teach and organise it and the children who attend.

▪ Be the spiritual leader for St Stephen’s Church School and be prepared to be the Chair of the Governing Body. To work with other local schools as the occasion arises (e.g. the local C of E Secondary School, Trinity).

▪ Understand and comply with Safeguarding legislation and ensure that best practice is embedded in all working practices as required. Show a commitment to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults, ensuring that this commitment is demonstrated in all aspects of the role as appropriate.

▪ Take an interest in and interact with the local community, particularly with local churches and other faith communities.

▪ Be an active advocate for the congregation and the Parish at all levels including Deanery, Diocesan and Civic.
- Ensure that the maintenance and improvement of the structure, fabric and artefacts of the church are effectively carried out and to lead fund raising for this purpose. Obtain faculties in accordance with ecclesiastical law as required.

- Ensure that your availability to the parishioners is known, especially with regard to emergencies, with an official published “office hour” for outside enquiries or contacts.

- Provide effective liaison and leadership for the support of any person who may be working with you.

- Undertake such duties and/or hours of work as may reasonably be required of you, commensurate with your role.

NB In consultation with you, this job description is liable to variation to reflect actual contemplated or proposed changes to your job.
PERSON SPECIFICATION

You will need to demonstrate how you can meet the criteria listed below.

Our ideal priest will be someone who is committed to leading a congregation towards a deeper understanding of the Anglo Catholic faith and growing the congregation in a diverse urban community. Ideally our priest will have:

QUALIFICATIONS

- A relevant qualification for Christian Ministry and be someone who will be able to be licensed by the Diocesan Bishop and who is a priest of “The Society” and/or SSC.
- An ability to demonstrate an understanding and commitment to the catholic tradition and teaching which the congregation follows and enjoys and has knowledge of the resources and practical ideas on how to maintain and continue this tradition.
- Enthusiasm for this type of parish and ministry and who has an awareness of the need to motivate people spiritually.
- An understanding that the individual spiritual needs of a diverse congregation may be varied and provides the leadership to bring them together.
- The ability to work with many different people with many different backgrounds.
- Ability to demonstrate qualities of initiative, responsibility and leadership in your pastoral approach to the church community.

EXPERIENCE

- Demonstrated pastoral skills and experience in areas of diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Experience of successfully engaging with local communities, schools and other Churches.
- Experience of preparing and leading spiritual groups e.g. Lent Courses, “Quiet Days”.
- Some experience with young people and undertaking outreach work e.g. hospitals / residential homes etc.

SKILLS

- An ability to enjoy providing spiritual support to older people, whether in the community or care homes.
- Excellent listening skills.
- Ability to show empathy.
- Understanding of the importance of being able to build a rapport
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Strong administration skills with sound computer skills.
- Ability to use social media effectively to support the church.
- A sense of humour.
- An understanding of Safeguarding legislation and its application and a commitment to Safeguarding and promoting welfare of children and vulnerable adults.
Southwark Vision 2017-2025

Our vision is founded on mutual commitment from all who make up the Diocesan family to walk together in the pilgrimage of faith, supporting, encouraging and resourcing each other in our common task.

A pilgrim people

We are a diverse community of Anglican churches, schools and chaplaincies in the hugely varied area of South London and East Surrey, from our Cathedral Church at London Bridge to our retreat house in the Surrey countryside. We work hard to journey well together, united by our faith in Christ. We’re discovering that God’s love changes lives, transforms society and sets our hearts on fire with the love of Christ; and so we are working to enable others to experience that reality.

Journeying together

From the Archbishop’s Charge given to Bishop Christopher in 2011, the Diocese of Southwark has been on a journey of discernment towards a shared vision which is now brought together from the themes and agreed outcomes described in the Strategy for Ministry adopted by Synod in November 2015, and Hearts on Fire: Vision for Mission, with its commitment to the five marks of mission and the strategic goals, adopted by Synod in March 2016.

A fruitful future

We share a vision for the future in which we will see:

- growing churches, new worshipping communities and new Christians
- deepening discipleship: engaged, prayerful and informed Christians
- growth in vocations to existing and new ministries
- generous giving and prayer supporting all we do
- justice and peace built up, and violence challenged, in our local and global community
- a shared commitment to the integrity of creation
- a church for all which reflects our diverse community in membership and leadership.
Resources for our journey

The two key documents which inform our work as a Diocese are:

• the *Hearts on Fire* Mission Strategy, March 2016
• the *Strategy for Ministry* Final Report, November 2015

These two documents together explain the detailed thinking behind the summary of our Diocesan Vision.

*Hearts on Fire* restates our commitment to mission, grounded in prayer that the growth of the kingdom of God may be at the heart of all we do. In particular we will:

• serve our Communities
• share our faith with great joy and gladness
• be the Church; a people with hearts on fire, loving God, walking with Jesus and led by the Spirit.

*Strategy for Ministry* sets out how we remain focused on that vision and mission, through ongoing cultural change as a Diocese. We are committed to becoming a Diocese which is

• Adaptive – seeing a culture of risk taking, permission giving and experimentation becoming embedded in the life of the Diocese
• Diverse – with visibly increased diversity in every part of Diocesan life
• Accountable – with communication demonstrated through increased sense of engagement from parishes with Diocesan central structures
• Devolved – especially in building up deaneries and encouraging them to become viable centres for mission and ministry, but also in encouraging collaboration, team work, and leaders who can enable and form individuals and communities.
• Strategic – looking ahead, discerning new opportunities which align with our vision and mission
• Realistic - aligning resources to serve vision and mission.

Supporting each other on the way

Our Diocese is made up of the parishes and deaneries, chaplaincies and schools in which individual Anglicans work and worship. The Diocesan vision will be realised primarily in the shared life, mission, ministry and service of all the baptised, clergy and lay together.

Diocesan structures and programmes seek to serve the whole people of God, in the following ways.
**Lead, Enable, Serve**

Those who work across the Diocese as a whole are committed to working in accordance with the following aim: ‘To serve, support, lead, and enable the mission of God as it is worked out in the parishes, deaneries, schools and communities of the Diocese of Southwark.’ This keeps the focus of Diocesan-wide bodies and officers clearly on the mission as it is worked out across the whole Diocese.

**Mission Action Planning**

The Mission Action Planning process is a key means for ensuring that the Diocese as a whole is working towards our vision and mission. Parishes and other communities which produce Mission Action Plans are asked to do so in the light of this, and specifically to reference how their MAP will reflect all of the five Marks of Mission. MAPs in turn resource those working across the Diocese as a whole with a richer vision of the potential areas for support and outreach.

**Parish Support Fund**

The Parish Support Fund exemplifies our mutual support in the Diocese most obviously through the sharing across the Diocese of the financial responsibility for our life and mission. Through its principles of generosity and accountability it enables all members of the Diocese to have confidence that resources are being generously given and effectively used.

**Outcomes and Actions**

The 2015 Strategy for Ministry Report identified a number of outcomes which we wish to see if the Diocese is to deliver on its vision and mission; the Hearts on Fire document emphasised our commitment to the Five Marks of Mission. Our commitment to the environment is expressed through the policy adopted by Diocesan Synod in 2013. Some outcomes have already been achieved, and others will become the focus of later objectives: we note particularly our commitments to the common good through attention to the needs of refugees and responding to London’s housing crisis. In order to focus our energies on an achievable number of these outcomes, we set ourselves the following objectives:

- to grow our average weekly attendance by 5% by 2025 partly through having each church develop a high-quality Mission Action Plan (MAP) which includes a course for evangelism and discipleship
- by 2025, to increase the number of worshipping communities with a primary focus on areas of population growth through investment in Fresh Expressions (fxC) in the areas where the data suggests the existing congregations are increasingly unrepresentative of the resident community and therefore unlikely to be successful in reaching them without intentional intervention
- to grow a financial resource base that allows investment in growth for the future. Key measurable include: annual financial surplus, working financial reserves equivalent to 6 months operating costs by 2020, 1% of Diocesan turnover annually dedicated to major Diocesan ministry and mission projects beginning in 2016, rising to 2% by 2020
- to grow the number of ordained and lay vocations by 50% by 2020 by enabling and discerning ordained ministers; by expanding opportunities for licensed and commissioned lay leadership; by affirming and growing other forms of lay ministry (e.g. worship leaders, family & youth leaders, spiritual directors); to offer relevant and enriching training, and create networks of support and celebration which reflect the diversity of the Diocese, our commitment to evangelism and discipleship, and delivers fully integrated and pioneering church growth and fresh expressions
- by 2025, to grow leadership and representation that reflects the rich diversity of our Diocese and especially focusing where the data suggests groups are currently underrepresented: through ethnicity, age (especially 18-40), educational opportunities, material wellbeing, tradition.
St Stephen’s, Lewisham

Statement from the Bishop of Fulham for the Parish Profile

The word ‘flagship’ can be overused, but it can justly be employed with reference to St Stephen’s, Lewisham. The parish is a centre of excellence both in terms of catholic teaching and worship, and with respect to its deep and inspiring commitment to engage with, and serve, the community in which it is set. The new Incumbent will find here a deeply supportive congregation which takes its faith seriously while also knowing how to rejoice in the riches offered by the anglo-catholic tradition at its best.

In return, the people of God at St Stephen’s will expect (rightly) their parish priest to take prayer and pastoral care seriously, and to work hard. I am looking for a priest who will understand this and respond accordingly, and who will lead the parish forward in a way which enables this congregation and community not only to flourish but to contribute significantly both to the life of the Society/Fulham parishes in the Diocese of Southwark, and to the wider life of the deanery, archdeaconry and episcopal Area.

The next Incumbent should be a priest who has the experience to be a confident and trusted teacher and mentor, able to take on pastoral assistants and perhaps in due course an additional ordained colleague. He will need to have the ability to manage substantial ‘plant’ and to explore fresh ways of enhancing the opportunities afforded by the church’s favourable location to connect with the local community. He will want to take up the particular challenges and opportunities of urban ministry amidst a diverse and highly mobile population. He will be committed to handing on the catholic faith as the Church of England has received it, and equally committed to witnessing to that faith within the Church of England in all its diversity, unafraid to participate in its structures.

This is an exciting opportunity for a mission-minded Society priest, and I look forward very much to discovering who God is calling here.

+Jonathan Fulham.
The Diocese of Southwark
St Stephen’s with St Mark’s, Lewisham
Bishop’s Statement

The Diocese of Southwark:
*A people with hearts on fire, loving God, walking with Jesus and led by the Spirit.*

St Stephen’s is a beating heart in Lewisham, positioned very visibly between the railway station, the police station and the shopping centre, not far from the edge of Blackheath. This northern part of the Borough of Lewisham is undergoing considerable rapid development and the congregation reflects some of this rich diversity in the community.

St Stephen’s is a lively, engaged, catholic parish under the Extended Episcopal Oversight of the Bishop of Fulham at the invitation of the Bishop of Southwark. Connections with the Patron, Keble College, through the chaplain, have usefully been active beyond just communications at the time of vacancy. There have been strong and fruitful links between the parish and the deanery and diocese in recent years, which gives credence that mutual flourishing can be more than just words.

The parish is within the East Lewisham Deanery, which has lively leadership with an effective chapter and active synod, and it engaged in seeking ways to develop the Diocesan Vision to grow our churches.

There are excellent relationships with St Stephen’s school (just beyond the parish boundary, due to local authority site availability), and this relationship is something the school and the parish want the new priest to make a priority going forward.

Though developing and diversifying, the parish still has significant pockets of disadvantage, falling just in the bottom quartile of more deprived parishes in the diocese. Since the introduction of the Parish Support Fund, St Stephen’s hasn’t really changed their pledge significantly, meaning that their contribution is falling behind in terms of the percentage of the costs covered each year; this area of finance and stewardship is one that the new priest will probably want to consider as a priority.

The Diocese of Southwark through its *Hearts on Fire* vision, and *Strategy for Ministry*, is helping change the image and presence of the church in South London and East Surrey, as it engages in the mission of God at every level of society. *Mission Action Planning* and *Fresh Expressions of church* are making real differences, and the shift to the Parish Support Fund has given new hope for sustainable financial models of supporting the ministry. Understanding these source documents, and sharing and communicating the Bishop’s vision within the parish and area will be important parts of the ministry of the priest.

Amongst the resources to help the priest engage with these challenges, are some gifted and keen lay members in the church, good support from local clergy in the deanery, helpful and appropriate training available through *Ministry Matters* and other CME opportunities, and a range of support for parish ministry from the Diocesan Office at Trinity House.
Qualities and hopes:

- a priest with a love of God, that others can recognise and identify with
- an evangelist with a desire to grow God’s church, particularly children and young people, in every way possible
- a pastor with a heart for this congregation and this changing community
- confident in the catholic tradition, engaged fully in the Diocese and Deanery
- to hold a commitment to mission, exploring what fresh expressions of church may thrive in the St Stephen’s context
- develop teaching and learning through using appropriate discipleship courses
- a willingness to strengthen the financial stewardship of the parish, and generous engagement with the Parish Support Fund
- an active participant in especially deanery, and diocese
- generosity in heart, word & manner
- exhibiting energy, emotional intelligence, resilience, and wisdom
- on openness to learn from, as well as teach others
- an intent to navigate diversity with confidence and grace

The Right Reverend Christopher Chessun, Bishop of Southwark
The Venerable Alastair Cutting, Archdeacon of Lewisham & Greenwich
Nov 2019

http://southwark.anglican.org/about-us/what/hearts-on-fire
http://southwark.anglican.org/help/stewardship/parish-support-fund