

PARISH PROFILE

ST PETER'S FARNBOROUGH





WELCOME

Welcome to St Peter's, Farnborough and thank you for reading our Parish Profile. We are excited about discovering the man or woman who God is calling to be our new Rector.

We are a large, friendly and vibrant evangelical church, with a good mix of ages, giftings and a breadth of worship styles. On Sundays around 300 adults and children worship here and during the week there is a busy programme of both church and community-based activities.

We gather around our vision to **love God**, to **love His church**, and to **bring God's love to our community and the wider world**. We are praying for a new Rector to lead us as we continue on this journey: someone who treasures the Word and the Spirit, has a passion for leading us as we reach out into the community, who can inspire and love the whole church community, and perhaps most importantly - in the words of one of our children - "someone who has the fruit of the spirit". And as another of our children pointed out, we'd also love someone who can "giggle and be a little bit silly sometimes"!

As you read on through this profile and discover more about who we are, what we do and our priorities and hopes for this new season in the life of our church, we trust that you will prayerfully consider whether God is calling you to walk alongside us as our next Rector.

OUR SERVICES

On a Sunday we hold four services. The **9:15** service is informal with band-led contemporary worship, attracting many families with children, and with children's groups and Pathfinders (for 11-14 year olds) running concurrently. We share Holy Communion once a month at this service and celebrate infant baptisms every other month. This is followed by our more 'formal' service at **11:15** which uses Common Worship liturgy, and includes Holy Communion every two weeks.

In the afternoon at **2:30**, we hold a quieter café-style service with some spoken liturgy, and at **5:30** we hold our informal evening service with contemporary worship led by the band. These services include Holy Communion once a month.

As well as our ordained clergy, we benefit from a large team of licensed lay ministers, occasional preachers, and other lay volunteers in all aspects of our Sunday worship, including preaching.



DISCIPLESHIP

We currently have around 26 home groups meeting both in the daytime and the evening. These also include groups that meet online, as well as seeker and post-Alpha groups. We consider home groups to be 'mini expressions of church', and hope for them to be welcoming to all, worshipful in seeking God in prayer and in conversation, gathered around God's word, and equipping members of the group to witness to Jesus Christ in their day to day lives.

Engage, held on the first Wednesday of the month, is our whole church prayer meeting with a mix of ways to pray and simple sung worship usually led by our Worship Pastor. An evening of sung worship, called **Breathe**, is held monthly on a Friday.

Living in Love and Faith

St Peter's has engaged in the LLF process by running a discussion group in October 2022 based on the LLF course content. St Peter's is proud of its evangelical tradition and would continue to describe itself in such a way. However, as might be expected of a church our size, there are a range of views in the congregation on the 'hot topics'. All our current clergy hold to a traditional view of marriage and we are looking for a like-minded rector but one who is capable of working in a context where lay views are varied.



SENIORS

At St Peter's we have an active and thriving senior ministry. Twice a month, **Meet and Eat** offers a space for the older members of our congregation and community to share food and conversation together, and sometimes hear a talk from a guest speaker. Each half-term, children from St Peter's School come and join with guests at Meet and Eat – a special time of sharing between generations.

Many of those who attend Meet and Eat go from there to our **Community Café Church** which takes place immediately afterwards offering a simple act of worship that lasts about half an hour.

Three times a year, we hold **Holiday at Home**, a one day event for the retired with talks of local interest, refreshments, cooked lunch and tea.



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Children's, youth and families' ministry continues to be a very important part of life at St Peter's, both on Sundays and during the week. Over the last few years we have worked hard to focus our mid-week ministry on reaching into our community and building meaningful relationships with the people with whom we have contact.



During the 9.15 Sunday service, we run groups for children aged 3 months to 11 years. Around 50-65 children first meet together for a time of fellowship and teaching before splitting into four age groups for more targeted teaching with a firm focus on fun and discipleship. The children love being with each other, have strong friendships with one another and are great at drawing new children into their groups. We have an amazing team of approximately 30 volunteer leaders who are dedicated in their service and encouragement of the children.

We currently run three main midweek offerings for children. **The Hub** is an after-school play café, aimed at infant school children and their families. **Lighthouse Club** is a weekly club night with a theme every week for junior school-aged children. The emphasis of this club is on leaders loving all children and church being a place of fun and community. Most recently, we set up **Mini Hub** as a replacement for our long-running and popular midweek toddler groups, but with a greater emphasis on building lasting relationships with families with young children.

We also run a busy programme of midweek schools' work, mainly working with three local schools, delivering assemblies, running lunchtime clubs and delivering the Transforming Lives for Good (TLG) Early Intervention scheme.

A highlight of our year is **Holiday Club** week, held during the summer holidays. The church, parish centre, and church grounds are transformed into a venue for 250 children to explore the message of God's love with drama, singing, storytelling, craft and sports. The Holiday Club is led by a large team of 75 adult volunteers and 50 teenage leaders. We have plans to extend the age range of holiday club as we have so many teenagers wanting to be involved.

We also run a family fun night on the Wednesday which has proved to be a great link in gathering the families of children who attend holiday club, into our church community.



YOUTH

We currently have four youth sessions a week, split into two age ranges: **Pathfinders** (school years 7-9), and **Discovery** (school years 10-13). Tuesday evening is our youth group night where young people can come and hang out in the Parish Centre, enjoy snacks, games, table tennis, Nintendo Switch, football, craft, and tuck shop, with lots of frisbee and wide games in the summer months. During these sessions there is a short accessible talk. Our Tuesday groups are fairly well attended with about 20-25 young people regularly at Pathfinders and about 15 young people regularly at Discovery.

On Sunday our Pathfinders group meets during the 9.15 service for Bible discussion, prayer, snacks and games. This group offers deeper bible study and aims to be a place of discipleship. Our Sunday evening Discovery sessions happen after the 5.30 service, and involve games as well as a deeper time of bible study and prayer. Both these groups attract lower numbers than the mid-week sessions.

In addition to youth groups, the youth ministry involves mentoring and other pastoral one-to-ones with young people. We run a couple of weekends away in the year, one for each group, and take a group of the older teenagers to the Satellites youth festival.

Many young people are involved in the wider life of the church aside from youth groups, including attending services, helping with children's groups on Sundays/midweek, playing in the band, helping on the sound desk, and helping as teen leaders at Holiday Club.



MISSION AND OUTREACH

At St Peter's we have a long history of supporting missionaries and mission organisations through prayer and finance. We have sent three teams on short term mission trips to Tanzania in recent years, and supported individuals to go on other short term mission trips.

During 2022 we gave financial support of around £65,000 to 18 individuals, families, and organisations, both at home and abroad. We currently support eight missionaries based in the UK and overseas, including Tanzania, Argentina, South Africa, Germany, and Philippines.

We also support a number of local organisations including The Triangle (a local Christian bookshop and café), and The Source (supporting young people in Aldershot), with a number of church members involved as volunteers or trustees in these organisations. We have church members who volunteer for Good News for Everyone, distributing scriptures to local schools, doctors, dentists, accountants, and army establishments. There are also many members of the church involved in wider community roles - as local councillors or school governors, for example.





[fusion]



We have in recent years felt a particular call as a church to develop our outreach into Farnborough. We seek to demonstrate God's love to our neighbourhood in practical ways through our **CAP Debt Centre** and our partnership with **Acts 435**, both of which enable us to help meet the many needs of those in our community. Our previous Rector, Libby, challenged us to be a visible Christian presence in our town, and as a congregation we have recently been involved in sending a team to help out at the **Farnborough Winter Half Marathon**. Our **Light Trail** event which takes place each year at Halloween and our partnership with one of the local shopping centres (including leading their carol service, and offering activities for children and youth in the run-up to Christmas), provide us with further opportunities to connect with our neighbourhood.

A **Dads & Kids** drop-in club is held on Saturday mornings, to build relationships and support fathers and their families.

ST PETER'S JUNIOR SCHOOL

We feel fortunate to share the same grounds as St Peter's Church; two historic buildings, side by side – a reflection of our special partnership and our community ethos. We have visitors in from the church regularly – working with children, helping around school and leading acts of worship and prayer space. Our children also visit the church regularly, including opportunities to reflect, pray and celebrate. The church brings us together as a school wide family, including special events such as the Year 3 Welcome Service and our Year 6 Leavers Service. Above all, we take great pride in being a school in our church community – using our gifts to serve others, as inspired by St. Peter. This includes our special partnership with the 'Meet and Eat' group, deeply recognised as having an impact on young and old.

Our Christian vision is at the heart of school life – it has been our driver for change and our on-going guide for reflection and development, resulting in school-wide impact. We are proud to be a school at the heart of our community, with a full range of opportunities for children to be of service to both our local and global community through our 'life in all fullness' curriculum and community partnerships.

We are proud to be a welcoming school, which is reflected in our growing number of children and families from all life backgrounds. We are delighted that Ofsted recognised our ethos and vision at the heart of school life, resulting in this opening sentence of our inspection report. "The school's vision, 'Living life in all its fullness', is the heartbeat of this welcoming and happy school."

Carmella Reece, Headteacher



WHERE WE ARE

Farnborough is situated in the north-east corner of Hampshire close to the borders of Surrey and Berkshire. Farnborough is home to many businesses, including companies in the IT industry, and is internationally known for its biennial Air Show.

In recent years the Farnborough International Exhibition Centre has been opened, staging numerous other major exhibitions and conferences, including the British Motor Show. There are good road and rail links to London (fast trains to London Waterloo: 34 minutes), Guildford and Reading.

Over 60,000 people live in Farnborough (2021 census) with approximately 8,500 people living within St Peter's parish. Rushmoor Borough has a younger population than both Hampshire and England with 66.2% under 50s compared to 62% in England overall.

Our previous Rector worked hard to build relationships with the numerous other churches across various denominations which call our town home, and St Peter's now has closer links with all the other congregations in our neighbourhood.



Campus, buildings and Rectory

St Peter's church building dates in part from Norman times and had a major re-ordering in 2011-2012, making it a great space for a variety of activities. The last Quinquennial report was prepared in 2020 by Thomas Ford and Partners. The fabric is in a good state of repair and no major building work is needed.

The Parish Centre is on the same campus as the church and is used extensively by both church groups and local organisations. It houses offices for the staff team. The Parish Centre has a well-equipped kitchen and can hold events such as receptions, large social events, indoor and outdoor sports, craft fairs and exhibitions.

Both the church building and the Parish Centre are well adapted to wheelchair users and are accessible. They are equipped with large projection screens and hearing loops. The parish owns a house suitable for a curate and St Peter's House on the church campus, until recently lived in by the previous Youth Minister.

The Rectory is adjacent to the church, in its own grounds. It has five bedrooms, two reception rooms, a bathroom, shower room, downstairs cloak room, a separate study and a generous kitchen with a dining area.



Finances

St Peter's is a well-resourced parish with a General Fund (for the day to day running of the parish) of around £500K p.a. of which 90% comes from the congregation including Gift Aid tax refunds. We have almost 100% success in reclaiming tax where it is possible to do so. Our reserves are also good, amounting to about 4 months of expenditure.

At the time of writing, just over half way through the year, we are a little above forecast in terms of balance although, since this results from an underspend so far against our expected expenditure, we expect to end the year close to our forecast closing balance.

Our support to overseas and home mission is provided through a separate, restricted, fund of around £65K, all of which comes from the congregation.



The staff team

We firmly believe that every Christian has a calling to serve God. The staff team works with many volunteers including a broad group of Licensed Lay Ministers and Pastoral Assistants in different areas of church life. We have a history as a training parish for curates and others, with an expectation that all are seeking to grow and develop their gifts in God's service.

Ben Perkins – Associate Minister

Richard Cobbold – Assistant Minister (OLM)

Sarah Norbron – Assistant Minister (OLM)

Janet Ruthven – Curate (OLM)

Beth Perkins – Youth Minister

Helen Smith – Children and Young Families Minister

Helen Rogers – Children and Young Families Assistant Minister

Yo Kim – Worship and Communications Pastor

Brian Ruthven – Organist

Moses Murefu – CAP Debt Centre Manager

Sarah Jones – Operations Manager

Jen Ballard – Admin assistant

Robert Dowse – Caretaker

Natalie Briscoe – Assistant Caretaker

Healey Newson – Cleaner

Our priorities and aspirations

As we prayerfully look to the future, we're aware of the following priorities:

To address a gap in our congregation among those aged 15–30.

We have long been aware that compared to the other age groups in our church, those in their twenties form something of a 'missing generation'. This, we suspect, does not truly reflect the demographic of our area. Added to this, we have noticed a considerable drop-off in the number of older teens attending our Discovery youth group since COVID. We long to see more of those who are in these age groups within our congregation and to better reach out to them with the love of Jesus.

To continue and grow our outreach and engagement with our community.

New initiatives like the Light Trail, and our involvement in the Farnborough Half Marathon have begun to transform our outreach as a church. We want to build on these foundations, finding fresh new ways to live out this crucial side of our vision, deepening the relationship we have with our neighbourhood and growing even more confident in sharing the good news of Jesus with our whole community.

A photograph of a church service, likely a baptism, with several people gathered around a wooden baptismal font. The scene is dimly lit, with light coming from stained glass windows in the background. A woman in a black dress is on the left, and a woman in a floral dress is on the right. A young girl in a pink shirt is kneeling in front of the font. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

To grow together as a whole church community with every member feeling that they belong and are valued.

Ours is a large and complex church with multiple different congregations, many of whom may rarely interact with one another. It can be hard for us to feel like a single church family. Added to this, in recent years much has changed in the life of the church, and for some members of our congregation there is a feeling of discomfort and rootlessness. Recognising the risk of fragmentation in a church community like ours, we want every single person to feel loved, valued, and that they are a part of a wider church family.

To grow in our discipleship and our commitment to loving Jesus.

While longing to see more people join us, we are also aware of our own need to strengthen the foundations of our faith, develop a deeper understanding of scripture, and become more effective in praying for ourselves and others. We long to grow in confidence and wisdom in exercising spiritual gifts and we want to deepen our knowledge and practice of spiritual disciplines.

Our Next Rector

We are praying for a man or woman who:

Has a passion for reaching out into our community...

...building on all that has recently been achieved in challenging us to grow and develop our outreach into the neighbourhood, and inspiring us to consider where and to whom God might be leading us next.

Treasures the word of God and the work of the Spirit...

...with a high regard for the authority of scripture, open to the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, and able to encourage people in discovering and being empowered by God's Spirit in their own lives.

Can bring together a church that has seen much change during and after Covid,...

...who has a pastoral heart and is able to foster a church culture where everyone feels, known, valued and can contribute.

Has relevant leadership experience...

...and a servant heart.

Can love our church family,...

...can inspire and love people with different views and preferences across different congregations, and can utilise and work with a large team of clergy, staff, preachers and lay ministers, male and female.

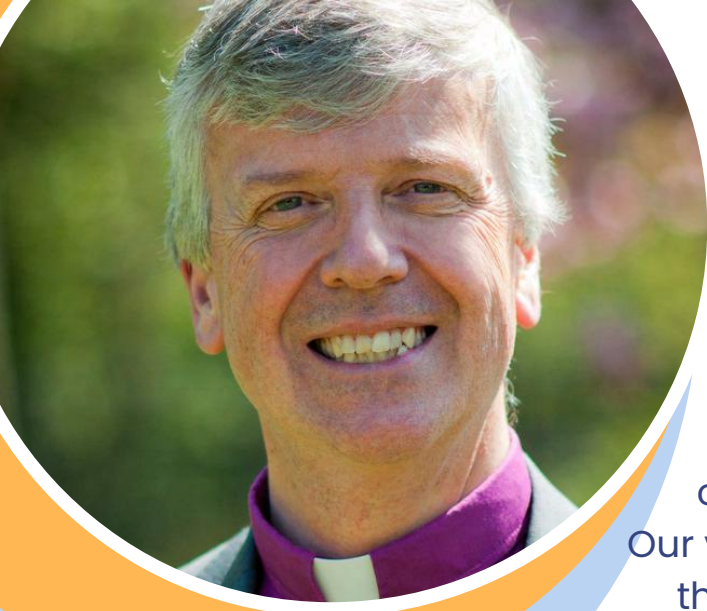
From the Area Dean

George Newton

St Peter's is a key and strategic church in the deanery and diocese. Historically it has been a sending church for many as well as impacting its parish and helping resource other local churches. It is a committed Evangelical church which seeks to equip its members through the Word and Spirit to impact their 'front lines' and to reach out to the parish and town of Farnborough. It is a healthy and viable church with vision and energy. There is a motivated and committed staff team of ordained and lay people as well as a host of able volunteers of all ages, all of whom look forward to serving with the new Rector. The site is both historic and modern and is well used and well equipped.

There are close and active links with the school and thriving children's, families and youth work, along with work with older generations, all of which impacts the local community and is reflected in the different styles of the services.

As the church seeks to grow and discern new ways of being church and reaching out, the diocese recognises the importance of this new appointment.



From the Bishop of Guildford

Welcome from the Bishop of Guildford, Andrew Watson

The Diocese of Guildford is a warm and friendly place to be, with a strong cohort of gifted and passionate laity and clergy, some excellent church schools, and plenty of beautiful countryside to enjoy on a day off! Our vision as a diocese is to see lives and communities transformed through the love of Christ; and, to that end, we have recently refreshed our

Diocesan Strategy Transforming Church, Transforming Lives, with a particular focus on Growing Disciples, Growing Diversity and Growing Community. Although our congregations are generally rather larger than average, we are all too conscious that we are only reaching a tiny proportion of our parish populations, and are particularly keen to become more effective in passing on the baton of faith to younger generations.

Our team of Mission Enablers are committed to working with every parish in fleshing out that vision in an appropriate way, going with the grain of the church's history and tradition, whilst also suggesting new ways to 'proclaim the gospel afresh in each generation'. The pandemic, while presenting many challenges, has helped to forge new relationships between many of our churches, creating a spirit of 'us and us' more than 'them and us', and opening up new approaches to partnership and inter-church collaboration.

If you share our vision for transformation, and have a track record in growing disciples, growing diversity and growing community, we'd love to hear from you!

Application deadline: 5th November 2023

Interview Day: 20th & 21st November 2023

Any questions? warden@stpetersfarnborough.org.uk (Colin Price, Margaret Taylor)

*The invitation is open:
come and join us*

