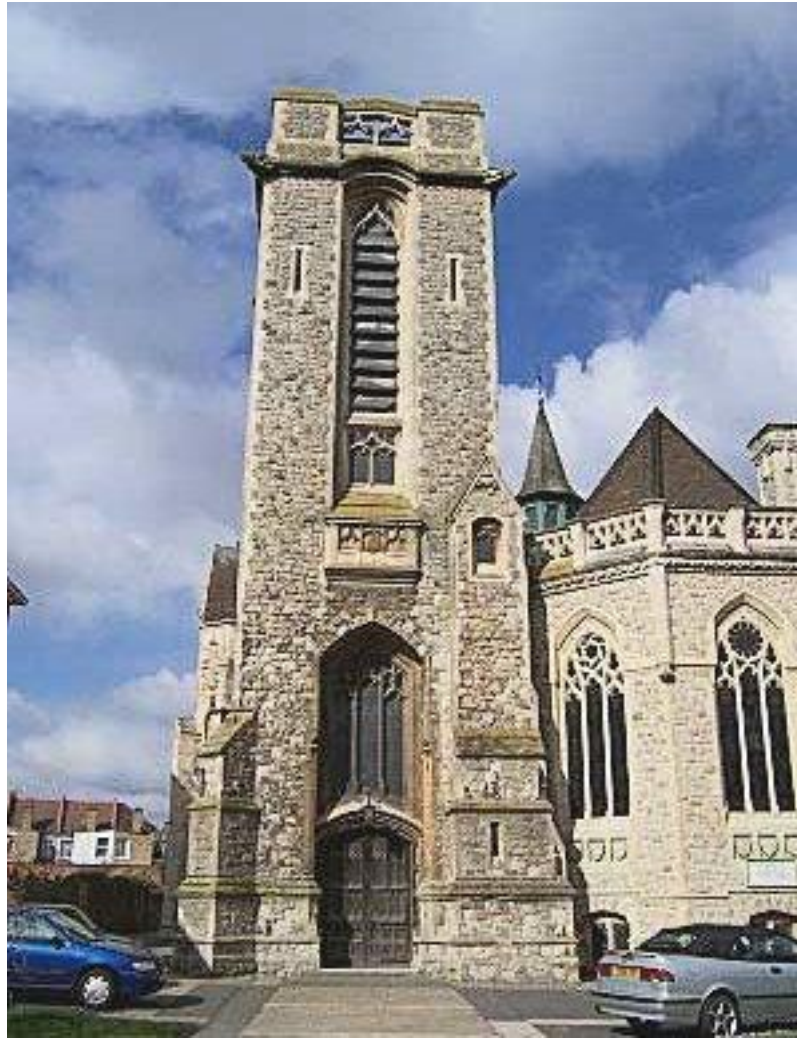


**THE PARISH OF
ST. MARY MAGDALENE with ST. MARTIN
ADDISCOMBE**

PARISH PROFILE



"CHRIST'S LOVE IN THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY"

CANNING ROAD
CROYDON
CR0 6QD

www.stmmm.org.uk

St Mary Magdalene

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St Mary Magdalene

A PARISH PROFILE

1. The Local Community

The parish of St. Mary Magdalene with St Martin is in the Croydon Central Deanery in the Diocese of Southwark. The present Parish was created by the merging of the parish of St. Mary Magdalene with the neighbouring parish of St. Martin in 1994. Many of the congregation and some of the artefacts were subsequently transferred to St. Mary's, after which St. Martin's Church was demolished and the land redeveloped as housing. The new parish has a population of c16,000. In recent years, there have been significant changes. The population is much more transient and younger. Older people are moving away and newcomers come from a wider range of cultural backgrounds. The population is now very mixed socially and ethnically. There is some unemployment, but those in work do a variety of jobs. With its close proximity to East Croydon train station, and the fast rail link up to London, many live in the parish to commute up to the City. There are a large number of young families and young singles that reside in the parish. There is quite a large turnover of people, as first-time buyers move to other suburbs to find houses with gardens, however there continues to be a significant elderly population.

Geographically, the area of the parish is not large and lies east of East Croydon station and north of the main Addiscombe Road (A232) (see parish boundary map attached at Appendix I).



There is good local transport with an excellent modern tram system that links up with the trains to central London. Sign to the Church can be seen at top right

The parish is a suburban, mainly residential area with a mixture of housing, with a lot of terraced housing and larger houses divided into flats.

Within the parish there are two primary schools, with whom the church has good relations. There is a recently rebuilt youth centre. There is one nursing home, in which the church conducts regular services.

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The Local Youth Centre (Phillip Game)



The Nursing Home

There have been some new housing developments by Housing Associations. There has been an increase in the number of multi-occupancy properties; either conversions of older housing stock or new purpose built flats. There are many semi-detached Victorian houses and some social housing, including the Davidson Road and Canal Walk area, which is an area of comparatively high indices of multiple deprivation.

Croydon is a robust, lively, multicultural conurbation. This brings with it many pastoral challenges such as youth crime, binge drinking, drug addiction, sex trafficking and other general crime. In the main, however, it is a good place to live.



Typical Addiscombe shops



Local shops

The parish has within its boundary a variety of shops. There are a surprisingly large number of restaurants and take away food outlets, all seemingly doing well. There are one or two larger companies and some small businesses and light industry. Traffic is heavy and car parking can be a problem and is quite expensive. Politically, we are served by a Conservative MP and local Council and Councillors, after Labour was defeated at recent elections. There is a local Neighbourhood Partnership. There is an Ismaeli Centre and an Islamic school in the parish.

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Our congregation increasingly reflects the population trends in the parish. Indeed, it is now much younger, more multi-cultural and socially diverse. We have noted an increase in the number of people who are new to church worship and/or to this country. There is also a large 'unchurched' population.

2. Relationships With Neighbouring Anglican Churches

The church is part of Croydon Central Deanery and good working relationships exist within the Chapter, which has a wide breadth of churchmanship. There are two other parishes in the Addiscombe area which have enjoyed good relations with St. Mary's over the years (St. Mildred's and St. Matthew's).

3. Relationships With Neighbouring Churches Of Other Denominations

St. Mary's is part of the Churches Together in Addiscombe (Roman Catholic, Methodist, URC, Church of the Nazarene and the three Anglican Churches). We have historically played and continue to play an active part and we give it our full support. There are particularly good ecumenical relations and co-operation with the local Methodist church. We also are in contact with the local Baptist church. There are ecumenical Lent groups and occasional shared services, including combined services for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and Advent Sunday. Ministers meet regularly together.

The clergy have been well connected with Croydon ministers, who meet for breakfast from time to time.

4. Mission and Evangelistic Projects

Under the leadership of the former Vicar, the church has been transitioning toward being a culturally relevant church. The church has changed considerably in the last nine years. It is widely regarded as an open, friendly and welcoming church. We still can be seen as quite traditional at times, but we work hard at accommodating all age-groups and cultures. It therefore needs to have a mix of the traditional and contemporary in order to be accessible to everyone. We work very hard at being racially inclusive. Incumbents over recent years have come from different perspectives in the Evangelical tradition. The former Vicar had a strong expository preaching focus. He was also committed to clear and decisive leadership, and sought to lead the church in a collaborative way through a detailed strategic process.

The "2020 Vision" is *'Christ's love in the heart of the community'* (see '2020 Vision' Statement at Appendix II). It is a statement for our church and the values we want within it. It is a statement looking forward to the result of our evangelism as Christ comes into the hearts of many people who become his followers. But it is also a vision of the missionary church of the 21st Century, seeking to impact the local community.

Following a trip to West Africa by the former Vicar in 2005, St. Mary's has recently twinned with St. Timothy's, Accra in Ghana. It actively supports home and overseas mission;

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including six Missionary Societies: Bible Society, Church Army, CMJ, CMS (with SAMS), Open Doors and TearFund. It is also a supporter of Kick London.

5. Pattern Of Worship

St. Mary's would best be described today as 'open evangelical', but in reality is without a 'label'. It is inclusive in its approach and the membership is made up of people from a fairly wide spectrum of church traditions. The preaching in recent years has been expository and applied and follows 'series' in the main morning services. The congregation increasingly resides in the local community; although some of the more established members live outside the parish.

The **Sunday** pattern of services is as follows:

10.00 am Morning Worship

(more formal in style with choir and music group; Holy Communion 1st and 3^d Sundays; Junior Church and Junior and Senior Pathfinders); All-age Service on 4th Sunday)

11.30 am Morning Worship

(informal in style with band; Holy Communion on 2nd and 4th Sundays; Junior Church)

6.30 pm Evening Worship

(traditional with choir, Holy Communion 2nd and 4th Sundays; Prayer for Healing on 4th Sunday, 1662 Evensong on 5th Sunday)

Usual Sunday attendance is about 150-200 adults and 35-60 children.

The worship styles are varied aiming to be creative, relevant and accessible to visitors. The trend has been to move the church slowly in a more contemporary direction. The current aim is to strike a balance in the morning, providing an alternative between formal and informal worship. Robes are worn at the 10.00 am on 1st and 3rd of the month, when there is Holy Communion and sometimes on 2nd Sunday. We use screen projection every week at 11.30 am and at the All-age and on special occasions for the 10.00 am service and are looking to develop this more.

The 11.30am Informal Worship is contemporary and non-liturgical, with music led by a band in 'New Wine' style. It has a growing attendance of c30-60, made up mainly of younger people. We try to be innovative in this service and have experimented with varied content and teaching styles.

In Midweek, Morning Prayer is said in church on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday at 9.00am. There is a service in the Crypt at 10.30 am on Wednesday (Holy Communion 1st and 3rd Wednesdays; Morning Prayer on others).

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6. Church Organisations

The robed Choir (approx. 20 members) rehearse on Friday evenings for 10.00am Sunday services. The Music Group (approx.10members) rehearse on Wednesday evenings also for

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10.00am Sunday services. The Band (approx. 7 members) rehearse on Tuesday evenings for 11.30 Sunday services.

We have an active Junior Church (c80 on the books with 35-60 each week) and active youth work (c30); with a junior pathfinder group (11-14 years) and a senior pathfinder group (15-17 years). The youth group also meets on Sunday nights and is encouraged to attend the informal service at 11.30 am. We have had Youth concerts and occasional youth services. We are looking at developing youth cells and youth worship.

0-5 Toddler Club meets on Wednesday afternoons

Rainbow Pack meets on Wednesdays

8th Brownie Pack meets on Friday evenings

8thA Brownie Pack meets on Wednesday evenings at Woodside Junior School

Mother's Union meets monthly on Tuesdays

A weekly Thursday fellowship group meets for the over 60's

There is also a 'Good Read' group and an active Men's Group which has regular social outings.

7. Regular Groups for Bible Study / Discussion / Prayer Etc.

We have been transitioning toward being a 'Cell Church' since 2002. Approximately half of the church are now part of 'cells' that we call 'Life Groups'; of which there are currently eleven. In recognised cell church language, we have come to see church as a 'bird with two wings': one 'wing' being the weekly corporate gathering and the other 'wing' being the cell group. The Life Groups each have 'Life Group Leaders', with assistant leaders, and they are overseen by 'Group Pastors'; of which there are currently four.

We operate with the widely known 'ABCDE' cell values (All involved; Becoming disciples; Creating community; Doing evangelism; Encountering God) and meetings follow the tried and tested '4W's' (Welcome, Worship, Word, Witness). The Word section is based on the Sunday morning sermon, with summary notes circulated each Monday, together with questions of application and general notices. Life Groups are encouraged to grow and multiply and we have had five multiplications. We have regular meetings and training sessions for the leaders and pastors.

For those requiring Confirmation, the church annually runs courses for young people and for adults. The church also runs a Marriage Preparation Course for couples preparing for marriage. We also host a Parenting Course from time to time.

The church has run various other courses. There is the Addiscombe School of Theology, which runs most years and enables people to grow in their understanding of God and the Christian faith.

We encourage mentoring, particularly of younger Christians, and have used the '4Life' material, which was written by our former Curate, Revd. Mark Powley, and is now published by Cell UK.

The church runs an annual Alpha Course. This is well organised and has a large team of helpers. We always seem to have a good number of guests attending and usually have at least three discussion groups. Recently converted Christians are usually joined together in a newly formed Life Group, often following on from Alpha.

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We encourage prayer triplets and have regular prayer days in church. We have sought to progress the corporate prayer life of the church and have a 'Dynamic Prayer Meeting' once a month (after the 4th Sunday) on Monday evenings for an hour from 8.00 pm to 9.00 pm. Prayer Ministry is offered at all services on Sunday.

8. Lay Involvement in Public Worship, Pastoral Care Etc

Up until recently, the church has employed a trainee Youth Worker (with Oasis Trust). It also employs an organist (vacant) and a part-time Parish Administrator. It employs the Manager and Assistant Manager of the Magdalene Pre-school and a part-time cleaner.

There is a strong lay involvement in the church, with most areas of ministry led by the laity. The ministry of the church is run through various teams:

A 'Shared Leadership Team ('SLT'), for setting strategy and working through the main decisions;

A 'Preaching Team', for those who preach and also lead worship. There are currently 2 Readers and 2 more Readers in training;

A 'Pastoral Team', we currently have 4 Southwark Pastoral Auxiliaries, for visiting newcomers and the sick and needy. A substantial proportion of the pastoral care is conducted through the Life Groups. The Pastoral Team, supported by a small team of 'Pastoral Visitors', picks up the balance of the pastoral needs. There are 10 on the home communion list who receive communion monthly. The Pastoral Team also hosts regular lunches for the elderly.

Various Life Group Leaders and Group Pastors have been trained. There have also been three Training Curates and three Trainee Youth Workers.

There is a Fabric Committee which is responsible for the upkeep of the church buildings. In recent years, a small team has considered the development of the tower and also looked at the potential for development of the Magdalene Centre.

All decisions are ultimately taken by the PCC.

9. Duration In Office

The two Churchwardens typically agree to serve for three years with the potential of serving one extra year.

PCC members are elected for 3 years.

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10. Estimated Parish Population

16,000

11. Number On Electoral Roll

The church has an electoral roll of 187 adults. Church membership is, however, not properly reflected in this figure. The Annual Membership Figure ('AMF') (those worshipping at least once a month) for Fairer Shares purposes is 217 and there is a considerable fringe.

12. Number Of Sunday Communicants

Usual Sunday attendance is about 150-200 adults and 35-60 children, for the morning services and about 15-20 for the evening service.

13. Occasional Offices

Baptisms: c30 children and c6 adults per year.
Marriages: c12 p.a.
Funerals: c20 p.a.
Confirmation Candidates: c7 p.a.

14. Ordinands from the Parish

In the last nine years, three Ordinands have gone forward for training; three have trained as Readers; four have trained as Southwark Pastoral Auxiliaries.

Two Vicars and one Curate in recent years have been appointed as Bishops. (one Diocesan and one Suffragan)

There is an Assistant Curate in her final year of placement in the Parish. She is maintaining services and activities during the vacancy.

15. Missionaries Sent Out from the Parish

No missionaries have been sent out from the Parish in the past 5 years.

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16. Parish Policies

Christian Initiation (Baptism and Confirmation)

There is an open policy for infant baptism. Those who enquire are visited at home and offered a Thanksgiving or Baptism service. There is a requirement to attend one church service and a Saturday morning seminar for those seeking infant baptism. Couples who are unmarried or are yet to be baptised are considered for infant baptism. Confirmation of children is normally for those aged 12-15.

Marriage of the Divorced

In the past the vicar has considered each case individually and has in most cases offered remarriage after divorce.

Safeguarding

The PCC has a full child protection policy and procedures in place.

Environmental

The Church has an active environmental management group which advises the PCC on environmental issues. The PCC has endorsed Diocesan policy, including “Shrinking the Footprint” initiatives.

Fair Trade

The PCC has declared the Church to be a “Fair Trade” church and registered with the Diocese as such. Southwark is a Fair Trade Diocese. Croydon is also a Fair Trade town and Church members are active in the local network.

17. Church Buildings

The Church

St. Mary Magdalene was founded in 1868 and has a rich history. There are many important architectural features, including stained glass windows, tiled flooring and an inspirational roof. The church is a stunning Grade II* listed building, reordered to worship ‘in the round’ in the 1970s. We are also in the process of repairing and cleaning the church tower stonework (cost c£200,000) and seeking to develop the tower entrance and forecourt.

A description of the Church Building and its history is included at Appendix III and more detail can be obtained via the Church’s website (www.stmmm.org.uk).

The Magdalene Centre

The Magdalene Centre was built in 1955 and extended in 1986 and is used by Church organisations and a variety of community groups. See also Appendix III. It contains the Parish Office, which is open 3 mornings a week and staffed by a paid Administrator, who is a Church member. Bookings for the Centre are administered by a church member and a part-time cleaner is employed.

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The Churchyard

The surrounding grass and flowerbeds are maintained by volunteers. There are no graves, and the car park in the front forecourt is laid in asphalt. A concrete and asphalt drive to the north leads to the Vicarage.

Current Works

The Church's stonework has deteriorated over the 140 years of its history and the congregation has prayerfully embarked on a series of projects to restore and repair the essential fabric of the building. The first phase of works at the Millennium restored the east elevation, which had deteriorated the most. The second phase is currently underway to restore the Church's eastern tower. This work should be completed by the end of 2009/ There is an ancillary project to create a more welcoming entrance by the introduction of glass screens and the creation of a new meeting and worship area. The execution of this work is entirely dependent on funding. English Heritage and other grant making bodies have provided substantial funding.

Future Works

The final phase of stonework will be to clean and restore the north elevation. The programme for this will depend on availability of English Heritage and other funding availability.

The Church will need to consider the future vision for the Magdalene Centre, which is in need of alterations to make it more Accessible. Renovations also need to be considered for the kitchen and the main roof waterproofing which is reaching the end of its service life.

18. Church Management

Major areas of the Church are managed through teams which meet regularly and report to the PCC. We have teams for Pastoral care, Finance, Fabric, Social and Fundraising events. We are fortunate to have some professionally qualified members on these teams.

19. Parsonage House

St. Mary's Vicarage was purpose built 25 years ago. It has five bedrooms, is centrally heated and has a good-sized garage and garden. It is in good condition. There is a spacious study with a high ceiling, which can be accessed by visitors without entering the family area of the house. The Vicarage is adjacent to the rear of the church, located behind the Old Vicarage and approached by a drive up the north side of the Church.

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The Vicarage



Front door with study on right

20. Indication of Parish Finances

St. Mary's is a substantial organisation that meets in a large and expensive to maintain church building. It has an annual budget of approximately £150,000. Of this, approximately £80,000 is from planned giving by 108 church members (of which 74 have gift aid tax reclaimed). Nearly £60,000 is raised through cash and other donations.

This is a significant undertaking and is largely dependent upon the sacrificial and gracious support of church members and worshippers. Those who are tax payers are encouraged to use the Gift Aid envelopes, so that tax can be reclaimed. Most of the support is provided by regular standing order. An offering is taken during each service.

Average giving is in the top quartile in the Diocese following a series of annual stewardship campaigns. There is, however, further potential for improvement of the levels of giving. If all church members gave the Church of England recommended percentage of 5% of net income, we would easily be able to meet our budgeted income target each year.

The annual Fairer Shares quota for 2009 was £83,000. There was a fairer shares review in July 2009 and the 'AMF' was increased from 200 to 217 and the income category lowered by one point from '3-' to '3- -' (the lower end of the middle income bracket), which means that we anticipate a small increase in quota for 2010. The quota is paid monthly over the first ten months of the year by direct debit.

In recent years, we have had small surpluses and deficits around the break-even level. In 2008, the surplus was £3,300. Extra funds have needed to be raised for building campaigns such as the church exterior stonework, the church heating system and the tower repairs. We are currently raising funds for the tower repair and cleaning and development. Each year there is a missionary gift day in early October and the target last year was set at £7,500, which was met.

The PCC fully reimburses clergy expenses according to Diocesan policy.

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21. Parish Magazine

Three issues of St. Mary's News (approx.100 copies) are published to coincide with major festivals, and 1 issue of Contact Magazine is distributed at Christmas to approx 8000 homes around the Parish.

22. Other Significant Responsibilities Linked to this Incumbency

We seek to maintain a high profile in the local community and are actively involved with local schools, the local youth centre and local nursing homes and care organisations.

The Addiscombe Neighbourhood Care Association is a registered charity, which was the initiative of the local churches. It gives care support to local people, particularly those who are frail and vulnerable. Many church people (from all the Addiscombe churches) are involved as volunteers. The local churches provide financial support. ANCA's work is recognised and financially supported by London Borough of Croydon, with whom there is a Service level Agreement.

The church also has a highly reputed Pre-school, which runs in the Magdalene Centre five days a week. There is also an active Parent and 0-5 Club and we run an annual Holiday Club in the Summer. The Magdalene Centre and premises are also used by a variety of community groups, including a Depression Self-help group, funded by the council and run by a member of the church.

Incumbents have, in the past, been asked by the bishop to train curates. The PCC would be glad to support the vicar in this important contribution to the formation of future clergy.

Parish Website

Many details of the Church, its congregation and activities are included on the Church website.

<http://www.stmmm.org.uk>

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B PERSON PROFILE

The Church of St Mary Magdalene with St Martins hopes to see a new Vicar appointed whose life has been turned round by God and who wants to do the same for others, who seeks out every member of our rich and varied community and has a heart to bring them to Jesus. Ideally we are looking for a person who:-

- Is prayerful and spiritual with a mature faith and has an emphasis on their own discipleship;
- Is a compassionate leader who is caring, people-focussed and a good listener;
- Is an excellent communicator and facilitator with good organisational skills;
- Is able to discern, encourage and develop the gifts of others;
- Will embrace the wide diversity of Church membership and relate well to people of all ages, and cultural and social backgrounds;
- Has a heart for local and wider mission;
- Has a sense of humour;
- Is able to deliver lively Biblical teaching that challenges and inspires people to change and preaches and reinforces the Gospel;
- Has the ability to communicate God's love to people through the variety of worship styles practised in this Church;
- Can encourage the development of young people and youth ministry through relevant activities and events
- Appreciates the use of technology to enhance and spread God's Word in worship and outreach.

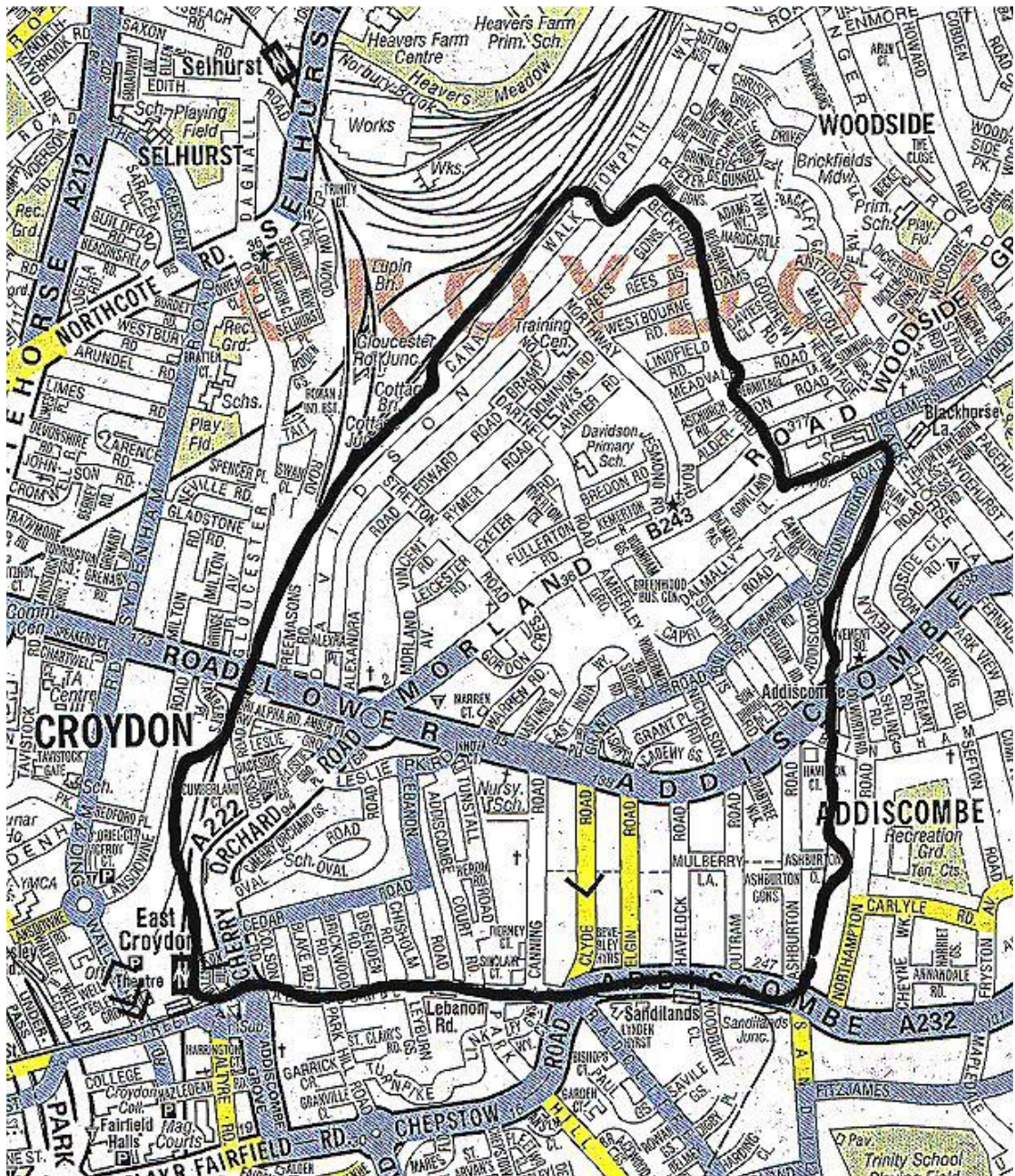
The following experience would be beneficial:

- Having worked with a large congregation
- Working with lay ministers
- Cell groups
- Organising Alpha or other outreach courses

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APPENDIX I

BOUNDARY MAP OF PARISH



St Mary Magdalene

APPENDIX II

2020 VISION

'Christ's love in the heart of the community'

- ◆ **It is the vision** of a ***compassionate church*** that reaches out to people, actively working at the centre of the wider community in partnership with others, to meet social, physical, emotional and intellectual as well as spiritual needs; transforming many lives with the power of the love of Jesus Christ.
- ◆ **It is the vision** of a ***large network of relationships***, friendships and communication systems through which the good news of Jesus Christ can be shared with the people who live in the parish and the surrounding area; bringing many into a personal relationship with the living God.
- ◆ **It is the vision** of a ***caring family***, which is multi-racial and socially mixed, where anyone, including the unfulfilled, confused, discouraged, hurting and broken can find satisfaction, guidance, healing and help and an opportunity to serve in an environment of open acceptance and love; finding hope for a meaningful and fulfilled life.
- ◆ **It is the vision** of a ***contemporary church*** which seeks a true spirituality, centred on Christ and his Word, and worship that is accessible and inclusive; engaging with God in a variety of styles.
- ◆ **It is the vision** of ***authentic fellowship***, meeting weekly in small groups to learn from the Bible and pray, sharing our highs and lows, laughing and crying, loving and forgiving one another; growing in spiritual maturity to become like Christ.
- ◆ **It is the vision** of ***every member ministry***, all discovering God's purpose for their lives and their unique spiritual gifts and talents and to serve enthusiastically in a climate where there is permission to hold different views, take risks and make mistakes; sharing the load to fulfill God's mission.
- ◆ **It is the vision** of ***growing the Kingdom***, with relevant biblical preaching and teaching, quality youth and children's work, and actively supporting local churches, church plants in unreached areas and mission partners who have been sent out from us around the world; helping build God's Kingdom.
- ◆ **It is the vision** of ***beautiful church buildings*** that are well-designed, welcoming and warm, both flexible and comfortable to cater for the wide range of needs of the church and wider-community; acting as a sign of God's Kingdom and providing all users with a sense of peace and well-being.

This is a vision of a healthy and vibrant church in the year 2020 that is great to be part of. It is a vision which God has a purpose in calling you to help fulfill, together with helping you to grow in faith in Jesus Christ and so find life in all its fullness and the assurance of eternal life.

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This is a vision that is to become a reality because the power of God by his Holy Spirit is at the heart of it bringing glory to his name, not our own, and making it happen.

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APPENDIX III

The Church Building

History

In the mid 19th Century, houses were being built on land previously occupied by the East India Company's training College which, together with Sandhurst and Woolwich, trained cadets for service in the East India Company. Despite local parishioners concerns, the Church of England did not respond to the perceived needs of the burgeoning population and the idea emerged of creating a new, non-aligned mission church. A local curate, Ben Oliel, previously a Jewish theologian, had converted to Christianity and was currently serving at St Matthews Church in central Croydon as Assistant Curate. He was an inspiring preacher and he agreed to break from the Anglican Church to lead the new mission Church of "St Paul's". The new church hired the old riding stables of the East India College.

The church grew rapidly and plans were laid to build a new, and much larger church on Canning Road. The congregation secured the services of Victorian Architect, Edward Buckton Lamb. The Architect had gained a considerable reputation (and not inconsiderable notoriety) for creating low church preaching auditoria utilizing elements of the Gothic Revival style, but completely in the face of conventional interpretations. His unconventionality earned ferocious criticism and opposition from the High Church Party and certain architectural critics, becoming dubbed a "Rogue Architect".

His style was judged entirely appropriate for what St Paul's and Ben Oliel wanted. The new church opened in 1868 and continued to flourish for several years, drawing packed congregations. However, Ben Oliel mystified his congregation one Sunday by announcing that there were to be substantial changes. The style of service was changed overnight from free form evangelical to high church ritualistic. The congregation deserted virtually en masse and began to attend the small "Iron Church" of St Mary Magdalene, which the Church of England had finally and belatedly decided to open three streets away. St Paul's meanwhile began to struggle and eventually had to close down some 2 years later through lack of funds.

Ben Oliel attempted to sell the building to the Church of England for £10,000 but a wrangle developed over the price. Eventually, £4000 was settled upon and the church building became licensed as a Church of England place of worship. The Archbishop would not dedicate the building until the congregation had repaid the purchase price and so, 10 years after its initial foundation, the dedication of the "Iron Church" of St Mary Magdalene was transferred to the Canning Road building. The incumbent of the Iron Church, Henry Glover, became the first Vicar of the Addiscombe parish.

Since these somewhat traumatic beginnings, St Mary Magdalene has served and witnessed to the people of Addiscombe.

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The Church Building

The main church is an important example of Edward Buxton Lamb's late work, constructed in 1868 and was one of the last buildings designed by this idiosyncratic Victorian Architect. It is constructed of Kentish Ragstone with a high and most unusual and original roof of Oregon Pine.

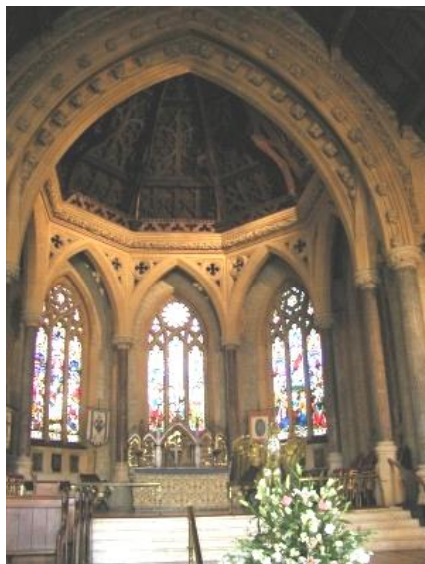
This Grade II* Listed Building is set back from Canning Road by a forecourt which is partly grass and part car parking area. The main entrance is via the Tower porch entrance. The tower is 24 metres high with a single large bell, called Gabriel. The tower stonework is currently under renovation with the assistance of an English Heritage grant. The first 10 metres of the tower were constructed to E.B. Lamb's design but not completed until the Church's 50th Jubilee in 1930 when the upper part of the tower was added to a different design.



At the north east corner is a single room vestry with pitched roof and ceiling.

The main church area is practically square on plan (30 metres x 35 metres) with four large pillars supporting the soaring and intricate pine timberwork. There is practically no conventional nave or transepts, the whole space rising to a central lantern over the crossing. The east end is more conventionally apsidal but raised from the main body of the church by 12 steps. Organ manuals flank each side of the chancel, whose main feature is the three fine examples of Victorian stained glass portraying the Nativity, Crucifixion and the Ascension. At each side of the steps leading up to the chancel is a stone pulpit, the south side higher than the north side. In the current re-ordered arrangement, these are now seldom used.

St Mary Magdalene



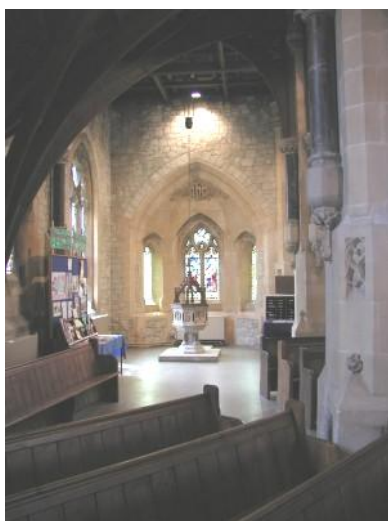
Chancel



Central sanctuary area

The Church was re-ordered in the early 1970s by Architect George Pace (whose work can also be seen in York Minster and Scargill House in North Yorkshire). The Church is now arranged virtually “in the round”. Conventional pews have been retained but all are movable so the worship area can be arranged flexibly. The sanctuary has a central oak table surrounded on three sides by communion rails (all of which can also be moved). There is a dais from which most preaching and readings are delivered. The flexibility of the space is used to good advantage for school carol services, orchestral concerts and drama productions. The church has portable staging which can be deployed.

A conventional stone font is located in the back (south west) corner, where there is also a stained glass window portraying John the Baptist by Easton (who created the Battle of Britain commemorative window in Westminster Abbey). The church has 3 other windows by Easton and a further collection of 19th and 20th Century stained glass. The north west corner is currently arranged as a play area for small children during services.



The church is lit by halogen downlighters at high level with some upward lighting of the huge timber roof. The sanctuary area is accentuated by a timber corona with lighting, suspended above the central area. The church has a full PA system with a hearing induction loop. There is a motorised back projection screen.

The rear doors in the centre of the west wall lead through to a rear entrance porch and a passage through to the Magdalene Centre. This 1950s building was extended in the 1980s and consists of a main hall, a small hall which can be subdivided by a sliding partition, a kitchen with a hatch serving into the main hall, toilets, the parish office, a crèche room and storage areas. The main hall has three double patio doors leading out onto the rear lawn.

The Magdalene Centre is heavily used throughout the week. Storage is at a premium because of the number of organisations using the spaces on a regular basis. The Playgroup has several external storage sheds outside the patio doors. There are some preliminary plans for refurbishing

St Mary Magdalene

the kitchen and toilets, potentially with some external funding to improve accessibility for people with a disability.

Beneath the chancel is a crypt which was converted in the 1980s for use as a meeting room and choir vestry, with kitchenette and toilet. The room is let out for external organisations as it can be secured off from the rest of the premises. It is accessed by a flight of steps from an external door on the East elevation off the forecourt and from inside the church by a flight of steps near the vestry.