

St Mary the Virgin, Hayes, Kent

Incumbent and Parish Profiles

Incumbent Profile

'An incumbent is like a head gardener nurturing and protecting young plants; promoting growth; sowing seeds in new areas; encouraging and equipping all who work in the garden; inspiring everyone to see the garden's beauty.'

Spiritual Life

- Gracious with a clear love for God and people
- Committed to the importance of the Bible and prayer in the life of the church
- Living a life guided by the Holy Spirit
- A heart to lead church members into a deeper relationship with our Lord
- A heart to bring those currently outside the church into a living relationship with our Lord

Communication

- Ability and commitment to clearly teach and preach the faith and share the Gospel message
- Open and articulate communication style
- Easy personal style, accessible, able to identify with and relate to the needs of a wide variety of individuals
- Mature pastoral and interpersonal skills
- Competent digital skills, to enable engagement via social media platforms
- Maintaining and developing links with leaders of local schools and other organisations

Worship style and tradition

- Familiar and comfortable with the range of Anglican worship styles in use at St Mary's, understanding the reality of spiritual experience, and potential for worshippers to feel the divine presence, across that range
- Inspire Bible-focused daily discipleship
- Encourage development of contemporary and all-age worship
- Recognise the importance of a variety of styles music and singing within worship
- Desire to actively promote and take forward the work with youth and families within the church

Leadership Qualities (*Turning passengers into pilgrims*)

- Gracious, yet authoritative, leadership style
- Should be an example to members within the church and a positive recommendation to those outside the church, showing holiness in life style, and humility in character
- Strong organisational gifts and an ability to delegate, particularly recognising the existing strengths within the ministerial team and the congregation
- Encouraging and supporting the many activities that are run successfully by church members
- Desire to promote activities and outreach from St Mary's and jointly with other churches in the area where this is appropriate
- Recognition of the position of St Mary's within the community and the attendant civic responsibilities and duties on the Incumbent

Parish Profile

The Parish

The Parish is part of the London Borough of Bromley but near to the borders of Kent, as denoted in its postcode address. It, however, retains its self-contained village atmosphere and is attached to the Green Belt.

Our Parish has a population of approximately 8,500 and is predominantly residential. There is a mixture of young and middle-aged families and a number of elderly people, many of whom live alone.

Hayes is well served by local shops and businesses and has its own railway station, good bus services and road connections.

The Parish includes two state primary schools and a comprehensive secondary school (judged as outstanding since 2011 by Ofsted). Baston House, a specialist autism school, is also within the Parish. We have very strong links with Hayes Primary School and Hayes Secondary School, which led to the formation of 'Hayes Community Foodbank' at the start of the COVID pandemic.

Church Fellowship

Within our church, faith has traditionally been expressed through worship services and an active desire to serve within the church and the wider community. Those worship services reflect the diverse needs and expectations within St Mary's from very traditional (BCP) to more contemporary styles of worship. In recent years there has been an increasing focus, where appropriate, on providing services that are more accessible to the wider community. This has been a welcome opportunity for the young in years to encourage the young at

heart, and to underline the importance of nurturing faith in pilgrims of all ages and backgrounds.

Reflecting our church vision ('to know Christ and to make Him known'), over the past few years, active Bible study and prayer groups have developed that, until lockdown last year, met regularly in people's homes. Some are ongoing and some occasional and intentionally focused around specific events and opportunities, including: Prayer for particular needs, short courses around various topics and Pilgrim courses. Some have continued on Zoom over the past year, and it is hoped that we may meet again in people's homes when it becomes possible.

Outreach into the local community is taken very seriously and the church has a particularly active ministry among the elderly in the Parish, for many of whom the church and its activities are a real lifeline and support, such as lunches and coffee mornings during the week.

Although many of those who worship at St Mary's are mature in years, at the 10.30 Sunday morning services there has been an increasing number of families. Contact with young families has also grown through the Fresh Start services. Through this the church has had an opportunity to explore ways of maintaining and developing this connection, with a view to helping the parents themselves grow in faith. There are good links with the local primary school, where we are invited to lead morning assemblies amongst other things.

The church is keen to develop its ministry and outreach with young and middle-aged couples and families as well as continuing its work with young people.

The church supports a variety of charities. For many years it has taken a leading role in Christian Aid collections each year in the Bromley area. The church has ongoing CMS missionary links and also supports Bromley Welcare. Our children's groups raise funds for CASPA Bromley, through leading various activities.

While cherishing our Anglican heritage, church members tend to be ecumenically minded and are very keen to work and share with other churches within the area. St Mary's is actively involved with Churches Together in Hayes. The committee meets regularly to share news and plan joint activities. We work together effectively to operate Hayes Community Foodbank.

PRE-COVID: What has been written above must be seen in the context of the impact of COVID on all of our activities and services. Throughout this time, when restricted by government regulations, we have maintained our presence within the congregation and wider community via livestreamed services and on Zoom. Pastoral care and communication have continued through phone-calls, emails, Facebook and door step visits. At Christmas our young people made cards and planted bulbs, which were delivered to those who were recently bereaved or live alone.

Average attendance at the Sunday services (latest pre-Covid 2019 Statistics for Mission) was 90 adults and 10 children under 17, which includes those attending children's groups and

the monthly Fresh Start Service. Currently, at the main Sunday morning 10.30 am service, typical attendance is in the range of 40-50 and at 8 am there are approximately 15-20. Recently, Fresh Start and face-to-face children and families ministry have resumed.

There are 155 church members on the Church Electoral Roll.

The Ministry

The Ministry team consists of the Rector and a Licensed Lay Minister who are supported by a committed PCC. At St Mary's the PCC members undertake responsibilities regarding aspects of church life, through specific sub-committees. Lay members of the church fellowship are encouraged and we are blessed with a very active church membership. There are also dedicated teams of Servers, Intercessors, Bible readers, singers and musicians.

Church Services

1st Sunday: 8.00 BCP Communion
10.30 Morning Praise (all age service with a band)
6.30 Common Worship Parish Communion *(This was pre-COVID - this will not be reinstated during the interregnum)*

2nd Sunday: 8.00 BCP Communion
10.30 Common Worship Communion

3rd Sunday: 8.00 BCP Communion
9.15 Fresh Start (short, informal service for under 5's and parents)
10.30 Morning Worship (more informal worship service with a band)
6.30 Taize Service *(This was pre-COVID - this will not be reinstated during the interregnum)*

4th Sunday: 8.00 BCP Communion
10.30 Common Worship Communion

5th Sunday: 8.00 BCP Communion
10.30 All-age Youth Led

Tuesdays/Thursdays: 10-12 Church open for Private Prayer *(Pre-COVID - on Thursdays this was Holy Communion but will not be reinstated during the interregnum)*

Saturdays: 10-12 Church open

Sunbeams (between 3 and 5 years old) and **Blaze** (6 to 10 years old) join the rest of the congregation in church for the first 10 minutes of services and then leave to meet in age-appropriate groups, except in the all-age Morning Praise service, when they remain in church. These groups are lively and stimulating, offering the chance for young people to discover more about their faith through a wide range of activities. **Illuminate** (11 to 16 years old) are encouraged to join 10.30 am services, but meet one Sunday afternoon, each month, for their own Bible study and discussion group. Some children and youth within St Mary's have received instruction to enable them to be admitted to Holy Communion.

Mondays to Thursdays: The Office of Morning Prayer at 9.15 am is well attended (usually around seven or eight) and has continued on Zoom during the pandemic.

Holy Communion is taken by a small number of volunteers to those who are housebound or resident at the Priory Hospital. (We are hoping this can resume when restrictions allow).

In the past there has been a steady number of weddings at the church. There is also a significant number of baptisms; these usually taking place after the Sunday morning service, although parents are encouraged to attend Fresh Start Services beforehand and a subsequent Sunday morning service for the child to be introduced to the church fellowship.

As the Parish church, we are regularly called upon to hold funerals, with interment of ashes and burials in the churchyard and Garden of Remembrance. Many of these services are with those on the fringes and a good opportunity for pastoral care.

Over recent years, ministry with local schools has developed and strong relationships have been forged, particularly with Hayes Primary school. Much of this work is carried out in association with the current pastor of Deep Water Baptist Church, which is part of Churches Together in Hayes. Together we lead assemblies and have in the past offered one-to-one mentoring to students. We have also linked children and members of our Mother's Union to be pen-pals. Each year, staff and pupils are invited to St Mary's for many activities and services including: year 6 transition reflection time, Remembrance services and Christmas concerts involving pupils and our own musicians and singers. Year 13 students from Hayes Secondary school also attend an annual Christmas concert where staff and pupils perform. Hayes Community Foodbank was set up in conjunction with both Hayes Primary and Hayes Secondary and we continue to work closely with the family workers from both schools.

Rector's Community Responsibilities

The church is at the heart of the local community and civic life. Inevitably therefore the Rector has various responsibilities within the wider community:

- Periodically taking assemblies at Hayes primary school. Annual Concert of the Secondary School in December.
- Chair of Hayes (Kent) Trust (a general relief and educational charity).
- President of Hayes Men's Afternoon Fellowship.
- Chair of Hayes Community Council (runs Village Hall).
- St Mary's Pre-School Play Group – Trustee.
- Old Church Schools (OCS) – member of Management Committee.
- Member of Hayes area Ministers' Group.
- Member of Churches Together in Hayes
- Uniformed organisations – a few (e.g. scouts) are affiliated to the church. Occasional attendance at management committee meetings and support for these organisations.

- Opening or blessing or representative involvement in local community events (e.g. May Queen, Christmas Lights, Hayes Fair).
- Maintaining links and building networks with local schools and groups.
- Ministering to the Priory Hospital. Weekly Holy Communion is offered but the Rector may be called upon to pray for patients in desperate situations. A team of lay people support this ministry.

Church Activities

Prior to March 2020 church members were involved in a range of activities that provide support for spiritual and social needs and fellowship. These included fortnightly prayer groups, Bible studies, fellowship and support groups, coffee mornings and lunch clubs. These groups met on the church premises and in people's homes on a regular basis. It is our hope to be able to resume at least some of these activities in the not-too-distant future. St Mary's has a strong musical emphasis as we feel it enhances worship. We are blessed with a group of instrumentalists, and hand bell ringing group as well as a Church Organist. Since our robed choir disbanded due to a decline in numbers, we have been building up our Singing Group which includes some of the younger members of our congregation. Our relatively new Bell Tower Captain is also hoping to encourage more people to come forward to train and be available to ring regularly for church services.

Information about church activities and services are communicated via our website and monthly church magazine, the 'Hayes Herald'.

Children and Youth Groups

Until two years ago St Mary's employed a Youth Worker which was funded by church members. This is something that we would like to explore in the not-too-distant future.

Illuminate

This group meets one Sunday each month between 5-6 pm, during term-time. During their time together, the young people aged 11-16 engage in a Bible study. Discussions often focus around life questions and discipleship in the context of their lives.

Uniformed Organisations

Scouts, Cubs and Beavers, Guides, Brownies and Rainbows meet throughout the week on various evenings in local venues. While not directly under the auspices of the church, these groups have extensive links with the church, and join us for Church Parade once a quarter.

Smarties Parents/carers and Toddlers Group

Pre-Covid, this group ran weekly, during term time in the Old Church Schools building. The group aimed to provide a friendly environment for young children to mix with each other while adults had a chat and a cup of tea or coffee. It is hoped that this group will resume in the future.

St Mary's Mini Music Makers

Pre-Covid, this group met once a month in the church meetings room. It provided an hour of songs and rhymes with actions, a story and a prayer to end with for the under 5s and parents/carers. It is hoped that this group will resume in the future.

St Mary's Pre-School Play Group

The Pre-School Play Group is an organisation that runs separately from the church. There are however, very strong links, with the Incumbent and a PCC member having representation on the Board of Trustees. The group operates in the Old Church Schools building during the week over 5 morning and 3 afternoon sessions. It caters for children between 2.5 – 4 years. It is very popular and has had very good Ofsted reports.

The Church Building

The church is over 800 years old and is well cared for and in good condition. In 2005 the vestry extension was built. This is normally in use throughout the week for various church activities.

Within 100 metres of the church is a large church hall complex (The Old Church Schools) which is in use throughout the week by various local groups. The Church, present Rectory, Village Hall and Public Library (the original Rectory) are all adjacent to one another in Hayes Street.

In the grounds of the church stands the village war memorial which is an important focal point for community remembrance. This is particularly significant at the annual Service of Remembrance attended by many from the community including the Royal British Legion (Hayes Branch) and other local dignitaries.

St Mary's Church is an iconic building within the community. Church members therefore, recognise the importance of overseeing and funding the care and maintenance of this site of religious and historic significance.

Church Administration and Maintenance

The Church has the benefit of a salaried, part-time Church Administrator who works in the church office and the church has its own web-site and Facebook page. The Church Administrator's line manager is the Incumbent (currently the Lay Chair of the PCC during the Interregnum).

General church maintenance and activities are overseen by the non-stipendiary Verger in collaboration with the Churchwardens. Church and vestry extension cleaning is carried out by a team of around 20 volunteers, working on a weekly rota basis, led by an Assistant Churchwarden.

The extensive and well-used churchyard is under the supervision of the Churchyard Superintendent (currently a Churchwarden) and Assistant. The Churchyard Committee (which is chaired by the Superintendent and includes a representative from the Catholic Church) is appointed by and reports to the PCC and meets 2/3 times a year. Professional gardening contractors carry out the heavy maintenance work including grass cutting etc. and are on site twice monthly from March to October, with additional visits during the winter months if required.

Safeguarding

St Mary's is committed to ensuring our Church is a safe space for all. The Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) provides the link between the Diocese and the Parish concerning safeguarding matters and is the 'go to' person at local level when there are issues or concerns around safeguarding matters. Safeguarding is an agenda item at each meeting of the PCC.

Church Finances

The Treasurer's report is available on request. The Church has been fortunate over the past few years to have received several legacies which have considerably strengthened St Mary's financial position, but the church remains heavily reliant on such legacies and income from the Old Church Schools.

Accommodation/Rectory

The current Rectory, and its extensive grounds, is adjacent to the church but its future is currently under review by the Diocese. Presently the Diocese is in the process of acquiring alternative accommodation within Hayes for the future Incumbent.

Website: www.stmaryshayeskent.co.uk

E-mail : info@stmaryshayeskent.co.uk

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1489939921188507/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCo7KNHYfOiKm95VXyQdFg6g>

Parish Profile Photographs

St Mary's Church



St Mary's Church Building and Churchyard



Hayes

