



The Parish of Kingswood

We are a church family that seeks to share the love of Christ with the community here and worldwide.

Parish Profile 2025



1. Welcome and Vision

Introduction

We are a welcoming and vibrant church family, passionate about sharing the love of Christ with our local community and the wider world.

The Parish of Kingswood, encompassing the churches of St Andrew's and the Wisdom of God, is prayerfully seeking a person to lead us into a season of growth—both in our worship and in our outreach to the diverse community we serve. Rooted in central churchmanship, the Eucharist remains central to our worship, but we are excited to embrace new forms of worship alongside cherished traditions. We believe this openness will help us connect with new generations, sharing the good news of Christ's love in fresh and meaningful ways.

Our two churches, each with its own distinctive identity, serve a thriving community of approximately 5,800 people. Together with our supportive and dedicated team—including a lay reader, an enthusiastic PCC, and a committed network of volunteers—we are ready to partner with our new appointment to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future.

The pandemic reminded us of the resilience and adaptability of our parish. During church closures, weekly online services not only sustained us but also reached new members of the wider community. Since reopening, we have welcomed back our regular congregation and celebrated the addition of new members. Whilst numbers have remained steady, we are eager to explore innovative ways to increase participation, particularly among children and young adults.

At St Andrew's, we are blessed with a congregation rich in experience and wisdom, largely made up of retired members. At the same time, the enthusiastic attendance at events like our Christmas Eve crib services and Wisdom Stories at Teatime highlights the wonderful opportunities we have to engage with families and younger people. These moments of connection inspire us with hope and energize our vision for a thriving future.

Visitors and newcomers consistently remark on the warmth and hospitality of our church family. We are confident that our new appointment will experience the same welcome and find a supportive, prayerful, and joyful community eager to journey together in faith.

We look forward with excitement and prayerful anticipation to welcoming the right person to lead us into this next chapter of our life as a Parish.

Kevin Chamberlain and Graeme Hopkins

Churchwardens



2. The Parish Context

About the Locality

The Parish of Kingswood is located on the North Downs in Surrey, within the borough of Reigate and Banstead. Surrounded by picturesque countryside, the parish lies just 15 miles south of London, offering excellent transport links via the M25 (Junction 8), Gatwick Airport, and frequent trains from Kingswood station to Croydon and central London. The nearby village of Tadworth and the towns of Banstead, Reigate, and Epsom provide access to schools, shops, and medical facilities, while larger hubs like Kingston and Croydon are within a 10-mile radius.

The parish encompasses two distinct communities, Kingswood and Lower Kingswood, each contributing to the parish's vibrant character.



Kingswood

Kingswood has a population of around 3,800. Over the past 25 years or so, its housing landscape has undergone a profound change, with extensive gated properties gradually replacing the older houses along its private lanes. During this period, a number of more affordable houses and flats have also been built, adding variety to its housing stock. One major project was the conversion of the Kingswood Warren mansion, which in the past housed the BBC's Research and Development Department, into luxury flats. Kingswood also counts three care homes.

At the heart of Kingswood, Waterhouse Lane features a parade of shops, a pub, and an Indian restaurant. The village hall hosts a variety of activities, including events by the Kingswood Amateur Dramatic and Dance Society (KADDS). Community organizations like the Kingswood Village Community Association (KVCA) and Kingswood Residents Association (KRA) actively foster a strong sense of belonging through initiatives like the Village Voice magazine and volunteer groups such as the 'Litter Pickers' and 'Station Gardeners.'

Recreational opportunities abound, with two golf and country clubs, a thriving tennis club with a junior program, and various local groups offering social and fitness activities.

St Andrew's Church, located along the A217, serves as both a spiritual home and a focal point for this vibrant community.



Lower Kingswood

The Wisdom of God Church is nestled in the welcoming Surrey village of Lower Kingswood, home to a vibrant and diverse community of just over 2,000 people, with a strong sense of community spirit and a shared love of local traditions, including an annual fete each May.

Lower Kingswood is a lively village with a range of amenities, including a well-regarded primary school, two churches (ours and a Baptist church), two recreation grounds, a church hall, a scout hut, and several social venues such as clubs and two public houses. The village is also home to a large financial services company, three petrol stations, a village shop, and a number of family-run businesses, contributing to a thriving local economy.

The community comes together regularly for much-loved events such as the village fete, school fete, fireworks night, Run in the Rec, and the music festival "Mogstock," showcasing the village's strong spirit of togetherness. There is also a variety of clubs and societies offering opportunities for connection and activity, including a football club, scouting and guiding groups, coffee mornings, and fitness and dance classes catering to all ages and abilities.

While our community engagement is thriving, there is an opportunity to deepen our connection with the youngest members of the village by revitalising groups for babies and toddlers. Similarly, we recognize the potential to expand outreach to men in the community, offering them new opportunities for involvement and fellowship.

The Wisdom of God Church is proud to be a cornerstone of village life, serving as a place of worship, connection, and celebration. With so many strengths to build upon, we are excited to continue our mission of sharing God's love with the people of Lower Kingswood



3. The Person We Seek

As a parish, we are prayerfully seeking a person who will inspire and lead us into a new season of growth, faith, and community engagement. We seek a leader with a living, vibrant, and infectious faith who will encourage and empower us as we work together to share God's love with Kingswood and Lower Kingswood.

Essential Attributes

- **A Parish Participant:** Someone with a genuine desire to engage fully in the life of our entire parish, recognizing the unique opportunities and challenges of both St Andrew's and the Wisdom of God Churches.
- **An Inspiring Preacher and Teacher:** A gifted communicator who brings scripture to life, supporting and encouraging parishioners as they deepen their faith and discover their role in God's mission.
- **A Collaborative Leader:** A leader who builds and nurtures teams, empowering the ministerial team and congregation to use their gifts, live out their faith, and contribute to the life and mission of the church.
- **A Central Approach to Doctrine:** Someone who occupies the central ground in matters of doctrine, fostering unity and inclusivity across our diverse congregation.

Personal Qualities

- **Pastoral and Community-Focused:** A compassionate and approachable individual with strong pastoral skills, actively engaging with parishioners, local schools, and community groups. This includes visiting the sick and elderly.
- **A Skilled Communicator:** Someone who can connect with people of all ages and backgrounds, sharing God's love in ways that are meaningful and accessible to all.
- **Welcoming and Encouraging:** A leader with a warm and inclusive style that invites everyone, including those on the fringes of church life, to feel welcomed and valued within our church family.

What We Offer

In return, we offer a parish eager to grow in faith and service, a dedicated team of lay leaders and volunteers, and a community ready to embrace and support our new appointment. Together, we are excited to journey forward with faith and hope, building on the strong foundations of our church life and looking to the future with confidence and prayerful expectation.

4. About Our Church Community

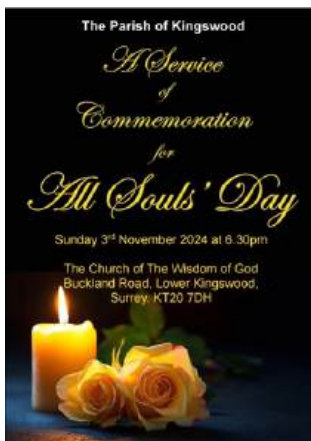
Regular Services

Serving congregations from a broad range of church traditions, from High Anglican to evangelical, we currently offer one service at each of our churches each Sunday, at 9.30am at The Church of the Wisdom of God and 11.00am at St. Andrew's. The majority of these services are of Holy Communion using Common Worship, but there is one Family Service per month.

With few children currently attending services at St. Andrew's church, family worship services have been suspended. The recruitment of more young families from the Kingswood community, of which there are many, would provide a welcome opportunity to revive these.



On some Sundays, the Morning prayer liturgy is used but this is usually reserved for those occasions where a Lay Reader is leading the service.



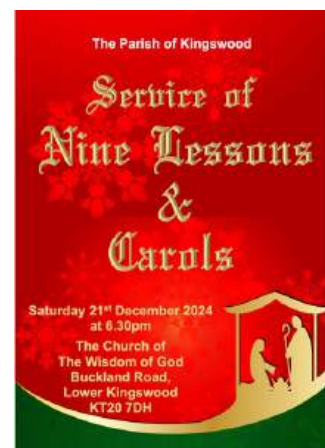
Special services are held on key days in the church calendar and include services of Compline and Tenebrae in Holy Week, with a vigil at the foot of the cross on Good Friday and, in some years, a Service of Light vigil on Holy Saturday.

Special Mothering Sunday and Harvest Festival services are held and an All Soul's Evensong or an especially crafted evening service is held each October.

Remembrance is observed at the War Memorial with a special service at which a trumpeter has performed in recent years.

The Advent season commences with an Advent Procession, followed later by a Service of Nine Lessons and Carols. Christmas Eve is celebrated with Crib and Christingle services during the afternoon at both churches and Christmas Eve communion at 9.00pm at The Wisdom of God and Midnight Mass at St. Andrew's at 11.00pm. A Christmas Day Communion service is held in the morning at one of our churches.

Services at The Wisdom of God are live streamed and available on YouTube with an average of 30 views per weekly video.



Our Parish Choir

Our highly regarded Parish choir alternates monthly performances between St Andrew's and the Wisdom of God, while also preparing special concerts for Christmas, summer, and significant occasions such as jubilees and anniversaries. The Wisdom of God Church is frequently used as a venue for young musicians, providing a warm welcome to families who might otherwise not visit.



Ministry to the Elderly

Services for the elderly are offered to our local care homes, Kingswood Court, Warrengate and Furze Hill Lodge and several of the residents of Warrengate Care Home are regular worshippers at St. Andrew's.

Lay Ministry

The parish has one Licensed Lay Reader who works closely with our clergy to offer support in many areas of parish life beyond preaching and leading worship.

Parish Administrator

The Parish shares the services of a paid Parish Administrator with St. Mark's Reigate.



5. Community Engagement and Mission

Engaging with the Community

The Wisdom of God Church enjoys a strong relationship with Kingswood Primary School, hosting the annual nativity play.

"Wisdom Stories at Teatime" every Wednesday during term time offers children and their parents a warm and welcoming space to explore faith and community after the school day on Wednesdays, during term time.

The grounds of The Wisdom of God Church come alive each year with the Church Fete, a highlight for local families and a wonderful opportunity for fellowship. Monthly coffee mornings, held on the first Wednesday, provide pastoral care to members of the community and an opportunity to socialise. These are often attended by our local councillor, reflecting our commitment to community life.



A highly popular and growing Home Group meets regularly to engage in Bible study, prayer and fellowship and members of our churches are keen to take part in Lent Groups.

Reaching Out to Those in Need

Our parish actively supports the Redhill Food Bank through year-round donations. Both churches have dedicated spaces for contributions, and during Advent, the parish has organised an "Advent Calendar Initiative," inviting members to donate an item each day. The Harvest Festival is another opportunity to donate to the food bank.



Global Mission and Outreach

Our parish maintains a connection with the Church of Central Zimbabwe, supporting the work at St Patrick's hospital, clinic, mission, and school, through prayer. Inspired by our commitment to global mission, members of the "Wisdom Stories at Teatime" group have organised a shoebox charity appeal during Advent, collecting gifts for children worldwide.

6. Buildings and Resources

We are deeply fortunate to worship and serve within spaces that are both beautiful and steeped in history. These buildings not only inspire worship but also act as centres for community life and mission.



St Andrew's Church

St. Andrew's, with its tall spire, is a striking Grade II listed building situated along the A217, about a mile from the centre of Kingswood. It was commissioned and entirely financed by Thomas Alcock, M.P., the then lord of the manor. Its design was entrusted to the renowned Victorian architect, Benjamin Ferrey, and the building is an almost replica of the Church of St. John the Baptist at Shottesbroke Park, in Berkshire. Consecrated in 1852, the church features, among others, a fine collection of Victorian stained glass and its peal of bells is one of the finest in Surrey.

The churchyard, though closed for new burials, provides a tranquil space. The maintenance costs of the churchyard are helped by a grant from Reigate and Banstead Borough Council. The adjacent green, complete with a war memorial and nearby parking, offers a welcoming approach. A ramp to the West door ensures accessibility for all.

Inside St Andrews, there is an Upper Room, which, whilst recently refurbished, is currently undergoing repairs to its roof. Once completed, this space will provide renewed access to our refreshment facilities, including a small kitchen and a toilet without disabled access. It is intended to serve as a hub for Junior Church activities, meetings, and other gatherings. This project reflects our dedication to creating inclusive spaces that foster both worship and fellowship.



The Wisdom of God Church

The Church of the Wisdom of God in Lower Kingswood is an architectural treasure, unique in England. Modelled after St Irene in Istanbul, this Grade I listed building is adorned with Roman and Byzantine artefacts, making it a destination for heritage enthusiasts and worshippers alike. Designed by Sidney Barnsley in the Arts and Crafts style and dedicated in 1892, it is recognized in Simon Jenkins' *England's Thousand Best Churches*. Its excellent acoustics and sightlines make it a perfect venue for concerts and readings. A ramp to the north door ensures ease of access.

Church Hall

Located on Buckland Road, opposite the Church of the Wisdom of God, our spacious hall is equipped with a stage, kitchen, and modern facilities, including accessible toilets. It hosts a variety of events and community gatherings to local group activities, creating a dynamic and welcoming environment. Income from rentals supports its upkeep and funds future projects, ensuring its continued role as a vital resource for our parish and beyond.

Church House

Also on Buckland Road, Church House, a 3 bedroomed detached house, is currently being rented but could be made available as accommodation for the new person.

Caring for Our Heritage

We always aim to maintain our buildings to the highest standard. The most recent Quinquennial Inspection highlighted several minor repairs, which have been addressed. Some other significant works have been undertaken in repairing roofing and repointing masonry, but we recognise that there is more to be done and we seek to marshal our efforts and our finances to ensure that we preserve our historic spaces, while ensuring they remain accessible and fit for worship, mission, and community life.

Finances

Below is a summary of the Parish finances for the last 2 years:

		Projected for 2024	2023 (actual)
INCOME		£	£
Non- Restricted Income			
Regular Donations		19,746	21,141
Weekly Collections		7,556	8,932
Gift Aid Tax		7,074	8,203
Fundraising events		4,276	3,960
Donations from Legacy Funds		19,776	15,995
Bequests		10,000	0
Church House Rent (net)		16,466	15,311
		84,895	73,542
Restricted Income			

Church Hall bookings (net of expenses)		3,638	3,465
Investment Income		7,263	6,917
		10,901	10,382
Total Income		95,796	83,924
EXPENDITURE			
Parish Pledge to Diocese		49,000	49,000
Organist Fees		8,608	7,825
Insurance		8,200	7,900
Repairs & Maintenance		11,334	10,013
Heat & Light costs		3,580	4,547
Administrator costs		4,787	4,352
Other expenses		4,712	3,837
		90,221	87,474
Surplus of Income over Expenses		5,575	-3,550

We benefit from a legacy which provides an annual income of about £20,000 on expenditure relating to St Andrews. There is a smaller legacy fund for the Wisdom of God.

We contribute significantly (as a percentage of our regular income) to the Diocese of Southwark under their new generosity based scheme.

Our current Treasurer is a Chartered Accountant. She has fully automated the Church finances in the last 3 years so that we always have up to date management accounts for our bi-monthly PCC meetings.

A full copy of the Church audited accounts is available on request.

7. Future Vision and Aspirations

As we look ahead, the Parish of Kingswood is committed to growing as a welcoming, vibrant and faith-filled community. Our vision for the future is grounded in both aspiration and opportunity, as we seek to ensure the continuation of our mission and ministry in an ever-changing world.

Goals, Challenges and Opportunities

- **Attracting the Next Generation**
Our top priority is to increase the number of regular churchgoers, particularly younger people and families. Engaging with the next generation is essential to ensuring the parish's future vitality and presence in the community. Services like the crib service have shown how well we can connect with young families. Building on this success, we hope to restart Junior Church at St Andrew's to complement Wisdom Stories at the Wisdom of God Church and to offer tailored opportunities for the children to grow in faith.
- **Strengthening Our Volunteer Base**
A thriving church depends on the active participation of its members. Our aim is to encourage more members of our congregations, especially from younger generations, to step forward as churchwardens, PCC members, sidespersons, readers, Junior Church leaders, all while adhering to safeguarding responsibilities. By nurturing and supporting volunteers, we can create a stronger foundation for the parish.
- **Creating a Welcoming Environment**
Both St Andrew's and the Wisdom of God Churches aim to be places of warmth, openness and belonging for all. From newcomers to long-standing members, we want everyone who enters our doors to feel at home and valued.
- **Prayer and Bible Study**
A greater focus on prayer, Bible-based teaching, and informal faith exploration, such as home groups and study sessions, would be welcomed by many in our community. An evening Bible study group already meets on a regular basis, but the re-introduction of a similar daytime group should be considered.
- **Expanding Community Outreach**
Beyond our walls, we plan to strengthen our presence in both Kingswood and Lower Kingswood. Our website is in need of being refreshed and our online presence requires enhancement. Our ministry team needs to be a visible and approachable presence in the community. Providing pastoral care by visiting the sick and vulnerable is a priority. Outreach to local care homes has already borne fruit and we are eager to expand this ministry further.

The fact that St Andrew's Church is situated outside the heart of the village presents a particular challenge and means that special efforts have to be made to make the church's presence more visible in the village. This can be achieved by keeping the information on the church notice board up to date, organising events of general appeal in the village hall (which has been done with great success on several occasions in the past) and by making good use of The Village Voice, the local magazine, to communicate with residents.

- **Increasing Community Access**

We aim to make our churches approachable spaces for everyone by hosting events such as concerts and community gatherings in the church environment so as to break down barriers and build familiarity, making the church a central part of community life.

- **Special Services to Meet Local Needs**

We recognize the importance of offering services that resonate with people during key moments of celebration, remembrance or reflection. Events such as the recent Remembrance service, which drew a greater attendance than usual, demonstrate the community's desire for spaces to gather and connect during uncertain times.

Looking to the Future

Ultimately, our vision is to ensure the Parish of Kingswood is a beacon of faith, hope, and love in both Kingswood and Lower Kingswood. By focusing on growth, community engagement, and inclusivity, we believe we can build a parish that continues to flourish and meet the spiritual and practical needs of its people.

We trust that, with God's guidance and the support of a committed church family, these aspirations can become a reality, and we look forward to welcoming a person who will lead us on this exciting journey.

With their leadership and God's grace, we look forward to deepening our faith, broadening our reach, and strengthening the bonds that unite us as a church family.



The Parish of Kingswood

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Gallery



Our Churches



The Wisdom of God

St. Andrew's



Our Parish



Kingswood



Lower Kingswood



The Church Choir



Parish Activities

