

THE DIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK REIGATE DEANERY

St Philip's Church Reigate



Faith Family Friendship Fun Future

St Philip's Reigate – A Parish Profile

We are a small church at the heart of a close-knit community which welcomes everybody.

For 160 years St Philip's Church have met and worshipped God together on Nutley Lane. Some people worship here for a few years and then drift away but many come back, perhaps at a different life-stage. Often people join from one of our weekday groups and find that they feel 'at home' in the Sunday services too. Some live in the Nutley Lane area itself but many more travel from across town to worship here.

The church has undergone both growth and renewal since the end of coronavirus restrictions. We are all keen to put that period behind us but for St Philip's it was an important point in our time. Not only were we able to take stock of what needed doing in the buildings (the church and hall were decorated), we had to learn new ways of doing things and pull together as a team like never before. After nearly two years of closures or restricted worship, we emerged stronger and with a lot of new faces in the congregation, many of whom have taken on roles in church as readers, welcomers, coffee hosts and have helped rebuild our sense of community. Others have been members of this church for decades and we benefit from their wealth of experience.

We try to be as inclusive as possible in our worship. First Sundays of the month are an example of this. Children stay in church with their parents and for family Eucharist. The congregation are asked to participate, perhaps in a short quiz or game to 'illustrate' the lesson of the day. We also enjoy activities related to our worship – a recent competition to grow sunflowers was popular.

We recognise that there are many ways of 'being church' and although we are comfortable with tradition, we are open to fresh ideas and are enjoying the variety of preaching styles that the vacancy offers. In our next vicar, we are seeking someone who will cherish the traditions and history of St Philip's but will take us forward with an eye on the future and any opportunities that we might be missing.

Our Mission Action Plan was agreed by PCC before the Coronavirus pandemic, and we have only had brief discussions since around developing this. We had also created a visual embodiment of the plan in the form of a tree.



At the core (trunk) of what we are about is strengthening our FAITH, creating a church FAMILY and having FUN along the way. We added two further branches more recently: FRIENDSHIP which became so much more important during the lockdowns when we were kept apart, and FUTURE, which commits us not only to a focus on running a sustainable, eco-friendly church; but also to working with, and through, the children and young people in our church to keep Christian values alive and relevant in the decades ahead.

Please enjoy reading our Parish Profile. More information is available at www.stphilipsreigate.com

Person Profile - the vicar at St Philip's

- A collaborative and creative person who sees opportunities to nurture others in their ministry and gives them the confidence to 'step up' when needed, perhaps encouraging expansion of the worship team.
- A calm and patient worship-leader who will 'meet us where we are' - St Philip's is an open and welcoming environment where members are at different stages of their journey in faith.
- He/she/they should possess a natural warmth and approachability and bring joy to worship, even in challenging times.
- We would like someone who will preserve our traditional, 'mid-spectrum' style of services and who also embraces diversity and inclusivity within the congregation and in our community.
- Self-sufficiency – the vicar will be required to handle much of their own communications and administration as there are no paid employees. (We have been using printing services provided by the Parish Office at neighbouring St Mark's.)
- Creative and fun – an appreciation of all the different ministries that make 'church' including music, social activities, gardening, arts and crafts etc. and a willingness to join in these activities no matter where their natural talents lie!
- He/she/they should be confident in communicating financial matters to the congregation, especially in encouraging generosity and good stewardship. St Philip's Treasurers and PCC have promoted the Parish Giving Scheme but need to put more focus on regular giving. A portable card payment machine is available for one-off donations but is shared between the church and church hall so some weekly donations are probably missed as many people no longer carry cash. Banking locally is also a challenge as many branches in the area have now closed!
- As Chair of the PCC, the vicar will need to robustly encourage new members and have succession planning in place for key officers who are nearing the end of their term in office. The current team of volunteers is relatively small, and each officer holds several responsibilities.

About the Parish



St. Philip's Church was founded in 1863 to serve the needs of the Nutley Lane area, to the north-west of Reigate. It was dedicated on 20 March 1863 by the Bishop of Winchester and was a daughter church within St Marks' Parish until 1950 when St Philip's was made responsible for the part of St Mark's parish south of the railway. It achieved its own Parish status in July 1992. Of the 116 on the Electoral Roll in 2023, approximately one third (43) live within the Parish.

St Philip's Reigate is situated on Nutley Lane in Reigate. It is walking distance to the high street which has retained many well-known brands and independent stores and backs onto stunning Priory Park with its award-winning children's playpark, skatepark, lake and café. There is an excellent choice of pubs and restaurants and many desirable schools. Rail and road links (Junction 8, M25) are a strong draw to the area for commuters and proximity to Gatwick is also an advantage.

The church itself is positioned in the middle of a charming residential neighbourhood with mostly Victorian cottages but with an attractive modern development (built late 1990s) behind it, off East Road. From the church, it is a short (but steep!) hike up to the top of Reigate hill where the views across the Surrey Hills AONB are breath-taking.

The parish of St Philip's has a population of approximately 3000 and sits to the northwest of the town of Reigate. It encompasses a variety of town and country housing. In addition, there is a pub, small industrial area and a number of shops and businesses. A large doctor's surgery on Yorke Road and a dental surgery on Slipshoe street also lie within the parish.

The train station is nearby and journey time to London is around 40 minutes. This means that the area is attractive to commuters and even small family properties are priced higher than in most other parts of the country. Higher mortgage costs could impact on the level of donations made to the church.

The proximity of St Bede's ecumenical secondary school in Redhill and Reigate Parish Primary school brings many young families to the local churches including St Philip's. The schools' admissions policies stipulate regular church attendance of a parent for periods of 3 years and eighteen months respectively and require a clergy reference.

About the Church



The Church and its People

Our congregation comes from all areas of Reigate, neighbouring town Redhill and surrounding villages. Many choose to come here because of a preference for our less evangelical style of worship. The church provides a traditional, but intimate and relaxed environment for worship. However, active participation in the rituals and ceremonies, for example, taking communion, becoming a welcomer or sidesperson, are encouraged.

- Music is provided by our organist and although there is no formal choir, a singing group meets regularly and performs at special services.
- Sunday worship starts at 10am (Family Eucharist). Sunday School takes place in the hall during term time, apart from first Sundays, when we all worship together. Average congregation size is around 50 adults and 20 children. *See Appendix 2*
- Refreshments are provided in the hall after each service by volunteers on a rota.
- On first Sundays, an 8am service is held (a traditional, said Book of Common Prayer with Communion) *This service is not taking place while there is no vicar in post.*
- Baptisms are held as part of the family communion service and the baptism party are encouraged to bring family and friends to join us.
- Our Sunday School meets from 10am in Church, moving into the hall after the first part of the service. There are just under 50 children registered for the Sunday School with an average weekly attendance of 15. There 7 Leaders and 9 helpers on the rota.
- Activity sheets are provided to school age children during school holidays and pre-schoolers are presented with 'busy-bags' containing an age-appropriate selection of toys.
- "First steps" is a monthly service for pre-school children and their carers. This is a short session of stories, songs and simple prayers, followed by refreshments and craft, and usually meets on the third Friday of each month (in term time).

- A 'coffee and chat' group meets each Tuesday morning in the hall. For a small donation, participants enjoy hot drinks, cakes and a weekly raffle as well as good company.
- We connect with each other through coffee after services, WhatsApp Groups, a monthly newsletter and several project-based groups. We don't at present have formal bible study groups, but a small number prepare for communion each year and in 2022, the vicar led a "START" group aimed at those who were new to or returning to Christianity.
- There is quite a high number of non-communicants in our church family. Those who are not confirmed are encouraged to come to the altar rail for a blessing and most do this.
- Our youth group and confirmation classes have not restarted since the pandemic. There are only a few children of secondary school age in the congregation.

The Church and the Community

- In 2022, there were 3 baptisms and 3 funerals held at the church. The vicar conducted 3 other funeral services or committals elsewhere. There were no marriages.
- There is no school in the parish but many of the children who attend local schools do live in the streets surrounding the church. The previous vicar was invited to become a governor at the local junior school and also to attend regular assemblies at another primary school for 'Open the Book' lessons.
- At 'First-Steps' services, young families are invited to enjoy a brief bible story, songs and craft with refreshments for up to an hour (some stay for a longer chat!) on a Friday morning, once a month. Most of these are not already in the congregation. The group regularly attracts around 10 toddlers and their carers.
- A Brownies Pack which meets in our hall usually joins us for Remembrance and Harvest and Christmas services.
- The 'coffee and chat group', currently held on a Tuesday morning, tends to cater for the other end of the age-spectrum but all are welcome! The group is usually between 15 and 20 with 2 or 3 volunteers hosting each week.
- Services are also held regularly at two local care homes and the sick are attended by request. The NSM at St Philip's is a regular (weekly) visitor at East Surrey Hospital as part of the Chaplaincy team.
- St Philip's has no licensed lay readers or SPAs (Southwark Pastoral Assistants). Our NSM, Eileen Stanghan, has taken on greater pastoral duties during the vacancy.
- Christmas and Easter services are always well attended at St Philip's. Easter Sunday services are usually packed with many guests from outside the congregation, joining us for the ringing of bells and many alleluias! Our Christmas Eve Christingle services, held twice during the afternoon, are 'standing room only' and last year's 'Lessons and Carols' service was also full.



The Church and its Buildings

The Church

The church, a simple but attractive structure is built of local stone and brick with a tiled roof supported by wooden 'scissor' beams. The windows are mostly arched and leaded with a large stained-glass window at the eastern end and a large plain glass window looking west. These let in a good deal of natural light and the space is additionally lit by brass chandeliers and suspended lantern lights as well as LED spotlights. The heating is provided by eaves-level electric heaters and a warm air curtain by the main door. The church is carpeted throughout and cleaned at least monthly by volunteers.

The vestry stands to the left on entering the building and to the right are fitted storage cupboards for books, cleaning and flower arranging equipment. In front of these is a carpeted area with a sofa and bookshelves stocked with pre-school books and puzzles.

We have retained the original pews and these have recently been furnished with comfortable cushions thanks to a legacy from a much-respected late member of the congregation. The church interior was decorated in 2020 and the exterior in 2021, during coronavirus lockdowns.

The church is set back from the road with a paved area where bollards prevent parking. This allows us to gather for a chat with the vicar or amongst ourselves as we leave a service. The borders are planted and maintained by volunteers. There are two wooden benches where passers-by can often be found enjoying the sunshine. The entrance is approached by shallow stone steps and covered by a wooden porch. There is no church yard. There is one bell, housed in a distinctive bell cote midway along the roof.

The rear (eastern) end of the site is laid to tarmac with a row of garages, owned by the church and rented out. Several of these are in a bad state of repair and the future of these is under review, subject to pending planning permission for some landscaping of the area and the creation of a proper car park for churchgoers and hall-users.

The Hall



Alongside the church is our recently refurbished church hall which comprises a main high-ceilinged hall with separate, carpeted side rooms, kitchen and toilets including disabled facilities. Please note that there are no kitchen or toilet facilities in the church so hall bookings can only be made outside of services times when these facilities are not in use.

Coffee is normally served here after Sunday services and the hall is sometimes used for church lunches and social events and our popular annual Quiz Night.

The hall is also used for Sunday school, and by the community for various activities, including a table-tennis team, a drama tutor, martial arts instruction and many children's parties. Since 2021, an after-school club has set up in the hall, weekdays until 6pm, during term time and it occasionally offers school holiday provision as well. The building also serves as a Polling Station.

There are two hall managers, one responsible for lettings and one for maintenance. They are paid a small monthly 'honorarium'. There are currently no other paid employees so cleaning etc. is managed by this team with help from PCC members.

As part of our stewardship of our buildings, members of PCC have formed an Eco-Group to further explore ways in which we can manage these properties and land responsibly and sustainably. We are currently working towards the A Rocha Eco-Church silver award.

There is currently almost no parking available at the church or church hall. On-street parking is also scarce. Some hall users park 'unofficially' behind the church by the garages and two cars can pull onto the driveway between the church and church hall but can only reverse off when leaving which can be hazardous! Plans to revamp and landscape the area and provide multiple parking spaces have been thwarted by external events but must be revisited by PCC. One idea is to provide electric car charging points on the site - a local, council-led scheme is being investigated.

The Parsonage

Next door to the church, to the south, lies the Vicarage, constructed in 1983, with its double carport accessed off the garage area, and the private garden abutting the south wall of the church. It has two large reception areas, one with french doors opening onto the garden, a modern fitted kitchen, a good-sized office, utility room and cloakroom. Upstairs there are 4 bedrooms, a generous bathroom with separate shower and an additional toilet with basin off the landing.

The garden is partly laid to lawn with well stocked beds and a mature hedging protecting it from the road. There are 3 storage sheds and a patio area. A gate leads directly onto the carport.



Our Finances

In recent years St Philip's has had total income of about £65,000 per annum. Half of this is generated from giving whilst we also receive income from Hall lettings (c£12,000 pa), Investments (c£10,000 pa), Garage rental (c £2,000 pa) and legacies. We recently enrolled in the Parish Giving Scheme and our take-up of this continues to grow.

In recent years, this income has been matched by expenditure with our largest items being the Parish Support Fund (2023: £47,000) as well as building maintenance costs (c £8,000 pa), hall running costs (c£6,000 pa) and the costs of the services (c£4,000 pa). *See appendix 1 for more information.*

The recent Quinquennial report identified several matters that will require attention over the next few years. We recognise that in order to cover the costs of this work, along with increased payments to the Parish Support Fund, we will need to encourage an increase in giving from our members. We may also explore other sources of income while continuing to keep our running costs in check.

Appendix 1 - Report & Accounts 2023 Summary

Receipts & Payments	2023	2022
Receipts		
Giving & Tax recovered	£31,815	£32,707
Other Income (including from investments)	£30,918	£27,378
Legacy	£0	£5000
Grant re: Fuel	£0	£1400
	£62,733	£66,485
Payments		
Diocesan parish contribution	(£47,000)	(£35,200)
Buildings	(£9,488)	(£3,207)
Pew Seat Cushions	(£5,049)	
Other Payments	(£16,267)	(£12,495)
	(£77,804)	(£50,902)
Surplus/(Deficit)	(£15,071)	£15,583

Appendix 2- Attendance Figures 2023 (as submitted in our Statistics for Mission)

	Usual Sunday attendance	Easter Eve/Easter Day	Christmas Eve (Christingle services)	Christmas Day Eucharist
Adults	48	83	240	28
Children	18	36	100	2
Communicants	25	51	N/A	20



We hope that have enjoyed reading the profile of our church. The Churchwardens and PCC at St Philip's are grateful for the guidance of the Archdeacon's office and the Area Dean in producing this document. Please do refer to our website for more information and to read our monthly newsletters. Visit us at www.stphilipsreigate.com. If you are our next vicar, we look forward to meeting you!