



# ALL SAINTS WITLEY

## PARISH PROFILE & STATEMENT OF NEED







Coffee break at Green Gym



Pop-Up Tea



Sing Hosanna craftwork



The Choir at Easter 2024



All Saints Together presentation – not a cookery demonstration!

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## PARISH PROFILE & STATEMENT OF NEED

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## From the Bishop of Guildford, the Right Reverend Andrew Watson



The Diocese of Guildford is a warm and friendly place to be, with a strong cohort of gifted and passionate laity and clergy, some excellent church schools, and plenty of beautiful countryside to enjoy on a day off!

Our vision as a diocese is to see lives and communities transformed through the love of Christ; and, to that end, we have recently refreshed our Diocesan Strategy *Transforming Church, Transforming Lives*, with a particular focus on Growing Disciples, Growing Diversity and Growing Community. Although our congregations are generally rather larger than average, we are all too conscious that we are only reaching a tiny proportion of our Parish populations, and are particularly keen to become more effective in passing on the baton of faith to younger generations.

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

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

**+Andrew Guildford**

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## From the Archdeacon of Surrey

The Parish of Witley is a great place for someone who would like to lead and grow the church in a single parish benefice, with just one church building, where the congregation want to grow younger and more diverse.

There are some good foundations laid, with a thriving toddler group, a successful Pop-Up Tea in the churchyard each week, Messy Church, the beginnings of a more frequent informal Sunday service, and good links with the local schools. We are looking for a capable, imaginative and faithful leader who will love the people and the community, offer worship in a range of styles, and enable the church to be a healthy and vibrant community of faith, which is sharing the good news of Jesus with the local community. Witley is in a lovely area and is a great place to live, and there are some wonderfully committed and enthusiastic people in the church, ready to work with their new incumbent on the priorities set out in Section 4 of this Profile.

I hope you will enjoy reading what follows, and that you will prayerfully seek to discern whether God is calling you to the Parish of Witley, and to the Diocese of Guildford.

If you would value an informal conversation about the post, please don't hesitate to contact me by emailing [catharine.mabuza@cofeguildford.org.uk](mailto:catharine.mabuza@cofeguildford.org.uk) or by calling 07785 990208. Please be assured of my prayers for all those reading this Profile.



**The Venerable Catharine Mabuza**  
**Archdeacon of Surrey**  
**September 2024**



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## 1 Welcome

Welcome to the Parish Profile for All Saints, Witley. Since you are reading this, we hope that you are considering joining us to carry out God's work in this lovely part of Surrey.

We are a strong, supportive and established community with a clear sense of purpose and mission in ministry. We also have a good informal working relationship with the neighbouring parish of Milford. Following the departure of our last incumbent after six years in the parish, we are now in a vacancy period. We are well-placed to manage this positively but are looking forward to continuing to develop and extend our mission with our next incumbent.

We are looking for someone with energy and commitment who will share our dedication to and love for this church, place and community and who will help, guide and lead us to fulfil God's purpose here.

If you have questions please contact our Churchwardens Brenda or Christine ([churchwardens@allsaintswitley.org.uk](mailto:churchwardens@allsaintswitley.org.uk)) who will be happy to help.



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## 2 Who We Are

The church of All Saints, Witley is in a traditional setting at the heart of Witley village, opposite the local infant school and a stone's throw from the pub. This physical setting sums up the two core principles with which we want to approach the next phase in our church life. We wish to build on our strengths and in particular to maintain our much-loved traditional (Common Worship) form of worship. At the same time, we want to be spiritually as well as physically in the heart of our community, reaching out in caring ministry through a range of additional means which may well be less traditional than our approach to our core Sunday services.

We have worked hard over recent years to develop a clear vision of our role and future. We are now looking for someone who will help us not only to continue to embed and shape that vision but also to expand it and to embrace necessary change.



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### 3 Our Vision and Mission

The vision is for All Saints Church, Witley to be the beating heart of a community filled with the love of God and love for God.

The mission is:

- *Community:* to engage with the village in ways that allow people to connect with God; to listen to local needs; and to become an agent of change, particularly through hearts and minds
- *Church:* to encourage growth and support the existing congregation through welcoming, accessible and inspirational services; to continue to preserve and enhance the church building to facilitate worship for future generations; to build on what we do well; and to promote long-term sustainable leadership
- *Congregation:* to grow and nurture mature, contemplative and active faith amongst existing worshippers and to affirm, inspire and nurture faith in children, young people and other new Christians





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## 4 Our Priorities

We have identified the following priorities and are looking for an incumbent who will lead us and help us to work on these together.

1. Our Church Development Plan has been established in draft and partly put in place. It should be revisited and the various strands of activity re-energised or amended.
2. As well as maintaining the successful and popular traditional format of our Sunday services, we need to look for more opportunities for members of the Witley community to worship in their church in ways which meet different spiritual needs. We believe that, as the only church in Witley, we have a responsibility to attempt to meet a range of needs through additional services and events, whether those be more or less “traditional” than our weekly services.
3. Attendance at regular services is relatively healthy. However, this is principally built on the loyal support of long-time regulars. Few additional members have joined the congregation or volunteer rotas in recent years, and succession planning is a key risk. The long-term future of Witley church depends on building a larger regular congregation with a lower average age.
4. Within this, there is a need for a particular focus on the children and young people in our local schools and their families. Re-establishing Young Saints for children aged from 3 to 11 is a key priority. In addition, as for many churches, catering for older young people and preventing them from drifting away from the church has remained a challenge and is one that we would like to address.

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5. The All Saints Church Witley website has an increasingly important role to play in communicating with the congregation and community and improvements to this and other social media channels are a priority.

## 5 Our New Vicar

We are looking for someone who will:

- Be grounded but have vision and imagination
- Be approachable and people-focused
- Discover and value our strengths and help us to build on them
- Provide inspiring leadership for our extensive teams of volunteers and lay workers, encouraging and enabling people to develop their skills, and nurturing vocations
- Enjoy working with children, young people and schools
- Bring energy and commitment to the mission and endeavours of our parish and continue to build links with the local community

In return we can offer:

- Numerous, supportive and experienced teams of volunteers with the enthusiasm and flexibility to embrace new ideas (including a retired priest, pastoral assistants and six occasional preachers)
- A well-equipped parish office (in a self-contained building in the grounds of the infant school opposite the church)
- A Parish Administrator
- An Organist & Director of Music and strong choir
- A wonderful parish environment in which to be and belong

If that sounds like you, and you think that God may be calling you to be our next vicar, we hope that you will be inspired by what you read in the coming pages, and by all the things we are able to offer you. We look forward to working with our new incumbent, and are committed to supporting him or her in their ministry.

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## 6 The Parish

Witley is situated 9 miles south west of Guildford, Surrey, on the southern slopes of the North Downs. This part of the county is semi-rural with pleasant undulating countryside and significant woodlands. Large parts of the parish are within the Green Belt and/or the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The parish, which has a population of about 3,800 also includes the villages of Wormley and Brook and the hamlets of Sandhills and Enton. It has a long history of development from a Saxon settlement of around 600AD.



The population of the agricultural community grew steadily until the latter part of the 19th century, when it accelerated following the coming of the railway.



Today Witley is largely a residential community with no local employers of major significance. The largest single establishment is King Edward's School. The majority of local job opportunities are to be found in retail outlets, offices and light industry in



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Godalming (4 miles NE of Witley), Haslemere (5 miles SW), Farnham (10 miles NW) and Guildford. The University of Surrey and the Royal Surrey County Hospital are major employers in Guildford. Witley is served by the London to Portsmouth railway and a significant number of people commute daily to London (journey time 55 minutes). Witley station is in Wormley, approximately 1 mile from the church.

In Witley itself, currently there is a village store incorporating a newsagent and post office, hairdressing salon, dog grooming parlour and three public houses. The adjacent village of Milford (2 miles), which is combined



with Witley as the civil parish, offers a greater number of retail outlets including two small supermarkets, a butcher and fishmonger, a farm shop, a barbers, a dry cleaners, a chemist, a post office, a baker, a petrol station, a restaurant, fish & chip shop and a large garden centre. Godalming is the nearest town, with large Sainsbury and Waitrose supermarkets and the usual range of high street shops. Guildford is the local shopping hub with shopping malls, a large variety of shops, and a Friday and Saturday Market.



Although the parish of Witley is spread over a considerable area, it has a good sense of identity and community spirit. Locally organised events in aid of the church or charities are well supported.



The principal focal points within the parish are the church, both church schools, the Chichester Hall (effectively the Village Hall), the Pirrie Hall in Brook, adjoining recreation grounds/playing fields, and the

White Hart, Star and Dog & Pheasant public houses. Milford Golf Club and West Surrey Golf Club are close by.

Housing in Witley is of mixed stock. There are many old houses along the principal axis of the Petworth Road with infill developments of a variety of ages. There are large private developments to the north and south of

Wheeler Lane dating from the 1930s to the last few years. There is also a large



area of local authority and housing association tenanted houses south of Wheeler Lane. Larger individual houses are to be found on the edge of Witley and in Wormley, Brook, Sandhills and Enton. More new housing is expected as part of the delivery of the Waverley Local Plan. A Witley Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in June 2021.

There are four schools in the parish. The Incumbent is usually an ex-officio Foundation Governor of Witley Church of England (Controlled) Infant School and there is one other Foundation Governor nominated by the PCC. The Vicar is also usually a Foundation Governor of the Chandler Church of England (Aided) Junior School (as is the Vicar of



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Milford) and there are three other Governors nominated by the PCC. King Edward's School is an independent co-educational boarding school with its own C of E chaplain. Barrow Hills School is its junior school, a co-educational preparatory school which became part of the King Edward's charity in 2015. State secondary education is provided by Rodborough School (up to 16 years of age), which is just outside the boundary of the parish, in Milford parish. Rodborough pupils who wish to pursue A-level courses usually go on to Godalming Sixth Form College. There are several private schools in the surrounding area and a significant number of children of all ages in the parish travel to these schools.

Two of the large houses built in the area in the mid to late 19th century have become residential/nursing homes. These are Surrey Heights and Surrey Hills. There are no day centres in the parish although Surrey County Council operates The Harbour (a special needs centre) on the edge of the parish and there is a day care centre in Milford.

There is an excellent GP practice, with surgeries in both Witley and Milford. The nearest major hospital is the Royal Surrey County Hospital located in Guildford. There is a community hospital in Haslemere and a community frailty unit providing care to older patients in Milford. Guildford also offers private hospital facilities: the Nuffield and Mount Alvernia.





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## 7 The Buildings

There is just one church building in the Parish of Witley. All Saints Church is of late Saxon origin with additions in the 12th, 13th and 19th centuries. The building has Grade I listed status and has been well cared for. The fabric is in good condition, not without very considerable expenditure in recent years! The last quinquennial inspection identified various areas of necessary work which have been completed.

The outstanding feature of the church is the early 12th century wall paintings on the south and west walls which have received significant conservation. The church also has an excellent three-manual Victorian



Hill organ, which last received a major overhaul in 1995, and a fine ring of 8 bells, which were improved and rehung in 2000. The church is kept open for prayer and locked only at

night. At the time of writing, we are in the process of replacing the ancient boiler. We do not expect any further serious expenditure on maintenance although we have been investigating the potential for installing a screen system for use in some services and events. This “vision project” has been put on hold during the vacancy.





There is a large churchyard which is still open for burials, and maintained by a team of volunteers who meet 8 times during the year on Saturday mornings between March and October at “Green

Gym” - which combines gardening with coffee and cakes, and a drink at the pub after the hard work. The churchyard includes four full ashes



plots and a fifth one which is still in use. The churchyard is a place of peace where many people go to remember their loved ones and some travel a long way on anniversaries or to seek the graves of long-dead relatives. Many long-standing Witley families have relatives from three or four generations buried there. This in itself is a service to the community.



There is a recently converted parish office in a self-contained building in the grounds of Witley Infant School, which is opposite the church.

There is no church hall, but as a result of a reordering in 2009 a large usable space was created in the north and south transepts. At the same time a kitchenette and accessible toilet were created. The space is used for church meetings, and also for wider community use, often on a rental basis for meetings, talks and concerts.

Large parish gatherings are held in the Chichester Hall (subject to a hire charge) or the Jubilee Hall. The Jubilee Hall is 50m from the church and is owned by the Scouts and adjacent to Witley Infant School. Its use is

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shared with the school and the local uniformed organisations. The church contributes to its upkeep on a regular basis at the same rate as other users and is therefore able to use it in term-time for Young Saints (Sunday school) and occasionally for other events.





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## 8 The Team

Revd Ann Fraser was ordained (OLM) in 2007. Despite her technical status as a “retired” priest, she works full time for the parish. Ann has been particularly involved in pastoral and educational matters in the parish and prior to stepping down to focus on the church during the current vacancy, was Chair of Governors at the Chandler School.

The only paid roles are the Parish Administrator, Organist & Director of Music and the cleaners. Mark Gill is the Parish Administrator, working 12 hours a week and the Parish Office is currently open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings.



Our churchwardens are Christine Parrott and Brenda Rounce. We also have three Pastoral Assistants, a Diocesan Synod representative and two Deanery Synod representatives, 12 elected PCC members, Safeguarding Officer, Tower Captain and rotas of readers, intercessors, servers, sidespeople and flower arrangers.

For services, the clergy are also assisted by six occasional preachers and our Director of Music takes a major role in the planning and performing of music. Lay people contribute to services by acting as servers and communion assistants, reading the Old and New

Testament lessons every Sunday and taking Intercessions. It should perhaps be noted that some of the roles on this list are in fact filled by the same people wearing different hats!

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## 9 Services

Worshippers receive an informal and warm welcome. All our communion services are taken from *Common Worship, Order One*.



Children are welcome at all our services, and a children's corner has been created at the back of the north aisle where families find a welcome space and suitable toys for their small children. The use of occasional preachers alongside clergy and visiting preachers produces a range of lively and varied sermons. On the first Sunday of each month we hold an all age service based on a shortened version of the normal formal structure, with a more informal talk or presentation in place of a sermon.

Centrally Eucharistic in our traditions, at Christmas time there is a crib service and a traditional Service of Nine Lessons and Carols. Ash Wednesday is celebrated and the Cross is covered at Passiontide. During Holy Week palm crosses are distributed on Palm Sunday. The Maundy Thursday celebration of Holy Communion includes foot washing and stripping of the altar and on Good Friday there is a solemn liturgy and Proclamation of the Cross as well as a family service. A new and successful addition for 2024 was a Good Friday "mini-messy church" service.



<b>WEEKLY SUNDAY SERVICES</b>		
<b>8.00am</b>	<b>Holy Communion – <i>Common Worship</i></b>	<b>Average attendance 14</b>
<b>10.00am – Except for First Sunday of every month</b>	<b>Sung Eucharist – <i>Common Worship</i> – Coffee served afterwards in church</b>	<b>Average attendance 42</b>
<b>First Sunday of every month 10.00am</b>	<b>All Saints Together – all age communion service – Coffee served afterwards in church</b>	<b>Average attendance 40</b>
<b>OTHER REGULAR SERVICES</b>		
<b>10.00am Wednesdays</b>	<b>Holy Communion – <i>Common Worship</i></b>	<b>Average attendance 7</b>
<b>Third Sunday of every month – 11.30am</b>	<b>Sing Hosanna – Service for young families</b>	<b>New service – too early to give average attendance – but rising!</b>
<b>Termly – 5.30pm</b>	<b>Sung Evensong – <i>Book of Common Prayer</i></b>	<b>Average attendance 25</b>
<b>Three times a year on Saturdays 3.30pm to 5.30pm</b>	<b>Messy Church</b>	<b>Average attendance 25 -60</b>





Other services are held occasionally such as a Pet Service and services for Ascension and Ash Wednesday which are often shared with Milford church.

We ran full weekly online services throughout Covid, including music and a sermon. This required hard work and dedication from a core team of contributors and editors. The services were very successful and widely viewed, significantly increasing our reach at a difficult time. When we were able to return to worshipping in church, the online services were discontinued, partly because of the work involved and partly to encourage people back into church. Return to church was rapid, probably partly because the online services had helped us to maintain community.



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## Clergy Dress

Cassock-alb, stole and chasuble are worn for Holy Communion, cassock-alb and stole for weddings and baptisms and choir dress for funerals and interment of ashes. For Messy Church and other informal services the clergy and others do not robe – although they have been known to appear in strange costumes! The servers wear cassock-albs.



## Music

There is a strong choir and an enduring tradition of good choral music. A balance is struck between the wishes of older members of the congregation, families and children. The *Common Praise* hymnbook is used, periodically supplemented by hymns from elsewhere, including our own modern songbook. There is a strong collaborative approach, with the Director of Music working closely with the Clergy to plan the music for choral services. Choir members are fully integrated into all aspects of church life and community, and join their families and the rest of the congregation in the pews when the choir takes its annual summer break.

A church band has been formed, and contributes to the All Saints Together, Messy Church and Sing Hosanna services in particular.

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## Occasional Offices

### Baptism

In 2024 there have been six baptisms to date and there were seven in 2023. Each child is sent an anniversary card for the first four years with details of any relevant up-coming events. This is much appreciated by the families. Baptisms are usually held on the 4th Sunday of the month at 12 noon in a 'stand-alone' service, including two hymns. Baptisms may take place in the main service if the parents request it. We are using the alternative baptism service on some occasions.



There is an open policy for baptisms. Anyone who lives in the Parish may have their child baptised and anyone connected with the church historically or through family connections, by attending Little Saints, having been married here, or attending a local school is also welcomed. After the date is determined for baptism, the family meet the priest who will carry out the baptism to go through the service, discuss the meaning of the baptismal promises and encourage them to attend Little Saints, Messy Church or Sunday services. If an adult asks to be



baptised, they are encouraged to attend a confirmation course and to be baptised and confirmed at the same time. This is not always possible or appropriate and each person is treated individually according to where they are on their Christian journey.



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## Marriage



In 2024 there have been three weddings. Two weddings are already booked for 2025. Wedding preparation is done with each couple separately by the priest who will lead the service. The present practice is to meet with all the known wedding couples in January of the year they will be married and



then the priest who is marrying them keeps in touch and meets with them at least twice more before the wedding rehearsal in the week before the wedding. It has been our practice to give pastoral support to those previously married as part of their new marriage preparation.

## Funerals

Like most parishes, there is a steady flow of funerals, with both cremations and burials, before or after a service in church. To date in 2024, five church funerals or memorial services, and three short services for interment of ashes in the churchyard have been held.

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## 10 Groups, Activities and Events

### Choir & Band



There is a good and enthusiastic Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) affiliated four-part mixed choir, mostly adults, which plays a key part in leading the sung services (with a four-part

anthem being sung at Sunday Sung Eucharist most weeks). Numbers may be boosted for major festivals or special performances. The choir is not auditioned (although previous experience is obviously valued), but is capable of undertaking some quite sophisticated music, and its repertoire includes items from a wide range of styles and periods from the 16th century to the present day, with or without organ accompaniment. The choir meets weekly for practice on Friday evenings.

Children are welcomed from about age 6 (essentially, when they can read), with their training including instruction in vocal technique, basic music reading and religious background. We follow the RSCM's *Voice for Life* scheme.



Choristers can also take RSCM singing awards, and two singers are due to take Bronze and Gold Awards in September this year. In 2016, we were particularly proud to have supported two children from the choir who became cathedral choristers (at Salisbury and Chichester). In

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previous years, two other choir children also became choristers at Guildford Cathedral.

In addition to the Sunday morning service, the choir sings Choral Evensong once a term, and frequently also sings at weddings. Recently, we have invited neighbouring parishes that have choirs to join with us for Evensong, and singers from Godalming and Farncombe have so far



done so, and appreciated being involved. A high point for the choir each year is the Christmas service of Nine Lessons and Carols.

The band normally leads the final song in All Saints Together services, as well as leading the songs at Messy Church and Sing Hosanna.

During the pandemic, the choir, band and junior choir made major contributions to the church's online services, with nearly 60 'virtual' recordings of anthems, hymns, songs and solos being produced, including for complete Remembrance and carol services. The first two of these were ready in time for Easter Day 2020.



The choir is now smaller than we would like and recruitment (particularly of children) is an ongoing challenge.



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The Organist & Director of Music has been assisted in the running of the children's choir by a Junior Choir Assistant, and there is also a Director of the band.



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## Bell Ringers



Witley has a pleasant ring of 8 bells, the oldest dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and a team of around 10 bellringers led by a volunteer tower captain. The bells are rung most Sundays before the 10.00am

service, and for Christmas and Easter services (except for Holy Week services but when possible including the 8.00am service on Easter morning). There are strong and supportive links between the ringers and the church, and two of the ringers are very active within the church in other

capacities. The Witley ringers maintain good links with other Diocesan “towers”. Practice takes place regularly on Thursday evenings when numbers allow.



The team has struggled with both numbers and health in recent years, particularly with younger ringers leaving for university, so recruitment and training of additional ringers is a priority.

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## The Friends of All Saints

This group was formed in 1997 with the principal objective of assisting the PCC in funding “desirable” capital projects it might otherwise not be able to afford, essential repairs and maintenance always having first call on available funds. The intention was also to encourage non-church members to take an interest in an important piece of local heritage. Since its inauguration the group has provided for the installation of an audio loop and sound enhancement system, seat cushions for the pews, contributions to the bell restoration project, the reordering of the church in 2009, the nave redecoration in 2010, and upgrading the church lighting.

## Pop-Up Tea



Taking advantage of our position between the infant and junior school, we are at the west door on Wednesday afternoons in term time meeting people. Tea or coffee is available for adults and 60 home-made cakes or gingerbread people are given freely to the children (one each!). This has created a social group of parents and grandparents who often arrive before

collecting their children to enjoy a chat. When school is over for the day another group gathers while the children play in and around the church. We have held very short Messy Church type events at this time but we are now encouraging families to attend the new Sing Hosanna service on a third Sunday.





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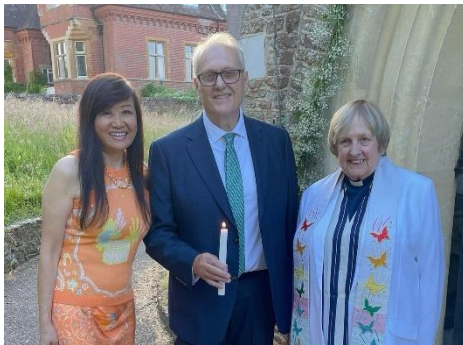
## Cameo – Come and Meet Each Other

Cameo is an informal group open to everyone which meets every Wednesday morning for fellowship and conversation over a cup of coffee or tea. CAMEO follows the 10am communion service but attracts many people from the congregation and the parish who do not attend the service. Occasionally there is a speaker if a particular person or topic arises.



## Confirmation and other Adult Education

The confirmation service is a Deanery event usually held in various churches round the Deanery, including ours. Preparation courses are scheduled to suit the candidates in question. We have recently had one adult confirmation.



Attempts have been made to run house groups with limited success, largely due to busy lives and time commitments.

Lent courses have traditionally been shared with Milford parish, also with limited success. For the past two years there has been a bible study during Lent with 6-8 people on an evening zoom and 6-10 in church after CAMEO. We have studied the books of Hebrews and Galatians. The Church of England's *Living in Love and Faith* course was also followed during Lent 2022.

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## Fundraising and other Events

A range of fundraising events are held throughout the year to supplement income raised through Planned Giving and collections in services. A village fair is held every year and the church runs several



stalls. This successful event provides both a valuable injection of funds for all the

organisations involved, and an opportunity to come together as a village.

Quiz evenings, an annual concert and Summer Bridge Teas have become a popular part of the church

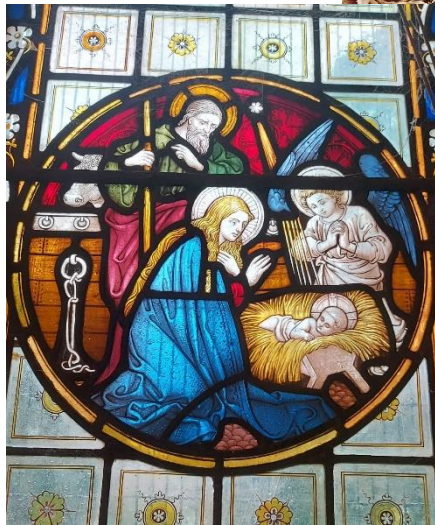


calendar, providing both fun and a good source of fundraising.

The church also has strong links with the Child of Hope charity which provides free education, healthcare and welfare to slum children in Uganda.









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## 11 Children and Young People

### Little Saints

Pre-schoolers and their carers meet every Friday morning, including all school holidays, in the church for tea and toast, coffee and chat, and toys, songs and stories. The adults include parents, grandparents, au pairs and child minders. A faithful band of volunteers keeps the refreshments flowing. A significant number of youngest-in-the-family-children have started school this term, which has had an impact on the numbers attending. We are slowly adding new families and all who attend find it a very special group, many making new friendships that last.



### Young Saints – Sunday School



Before Covid there were 25 children on roll divided into infant and junior sections with attendance fluctuating from 5 to 20. As is the case in many churches, numbers have fallen off drastically and currently show no signs of recovery, with just two siblings on roll. Recently the PCC agreed that Young Saints should be paused and not be advertised as a current offering. We are preparing packs of activities which can be given to families to use with their children during the service as needed. There are some adults willing to facilitate this if the need arises and a few volunteers willing to run a group if we manage to improve numbers. On a more positive note, we encourage families to attend All Saints Together on the first Sunday and Sing Hosanna on the third Sunday. We would like to appoint a Children and Families Worker to help with this work at an appropriate time.

Rebuilding this part of our community and worship is a key priority.

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## Youth Group

Various attempts have been made over the years to establish a youth group. Some success was had seven or eight years ago, with a group of six to ten teenagers from core church families meeting monthly and engaging in activities including a camping trip. In July 2017 the group, along with the incumbent, joined a group from Holy Trinity church in Guildford on a volunteering visit to the Kwasa school and safe centre which provides an education for children from an informal settlement near Johannesburg. The Witley young people participating in the visit ran a significant fundraising campaign during the months leading up to it which engaged the whole church community. The group became embedded in the life of the church, with many of them acting as servers and intercessors, and one as an occasional preacher. However, with the gradual departure of all of the members to university the group dissolved, though most of the members still attend services on visits home. We would like to re-establish this type of activity.

## Messy Church



Messy Church was established 12 years ago and has proved very popular. Presently there are three Saturday afternoon sessions each year attracting anything from 25 to 60 children and at least 15 helpers. Many families are Messy Church

regulars, and there is a strong overlap with Little Saints, Pop-Up Tea and baptism families, but as yet little or no crossover into attendance at Sunday Services.

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## 12 Community Links

Many of the activities described previously attract members of the community who are not part of our normal Sunday congregation. As a result, we touch a huge range of people in the parish, far greater than might be expected from our average service attendance numbers. The All Saints Church Witley website ([www.allsaintswitley.org.uk](http://www.allsaintswitley.org.uk)) has an increasingly important role to play in communicating with the congregation and community. Maintaining and improving this and our social media channels is a key priority. However, there is no substitute for the personal visibility within the parish of the incumbent and other key members of the church community.

### Links with Church Schools

The church has close links with both Witley Infant School (Voluntary Controlled) and The Chandler C of E Junior School (Voluntary Aided). The



infant school has an intake of 30 pupils each year and as siblings have priority, the catchment area is close to the school. The infant school visits the church class by class each term and the vicar, Ann and others, meet them there for 30-45 minutes with a different focus each time, including a 'pretend marriage' service for Reception class. As a result of Little Saints, many of the children and their families are known to us and consider All Saints to be their church. They happily attend Messy Church and other events, but few come on Sundays on a regular basis. Harvest, Christmas and Easter services are held in church and involve the clergy. *Open The Book* is held on alternate weeks, which is very popular with the children and involves a strong team of members of the



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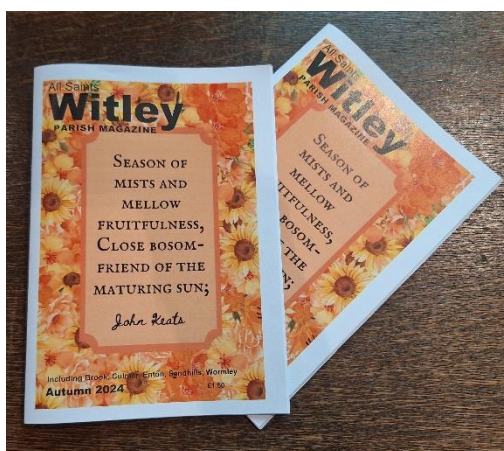
congregation. The incumbent is an ex-officio member of the Governing Body.

The Chandler Church of England Junior School is the Voluntary Aided school linked to both Witley and Milford churches. The OFSTED inspection in January 2023 resulted in a 'Good' judgement for the second time (the previous inspection was in 2017). Each class tries to visit the church once a year and *Open The Book* is also a regular fixture in the school. Along with Milford parish, the clergy take an assembly every Thursday. At the end of every term a service is held in school or at All Saints run by clergy from both parishes.

The incumbents of All Saints and of St John's, Milford, are ex-officio members of the Governing Body. Presently both incumbents have delegated the role at this school to retired colleagues. For Witley, the Revd Ann Fraser has replaced the incumbent as an ex-officio member for the past two years.

There are few families from either school who attend church regularly.

## Parish Magazine



Our parish magazine is published quarterly and circulated to around 300 homes in the parish either electronically or in hard copy at a small charge. The magazine is edited by the Parish Administrator and there is a team of distributors. Apart from providing information on services and church activities, the magazine includes articles on prayer

and worship and other general parish news. The popularity of the magazine is demonstrated by the fact that local shops and those providing services are keen to take advertising space. The newsletter from the Witley (Civil) Parish Council (which includes Milford) is published annually.

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## Youth Organisations



Various Scout and Guide sections are represented in Witley but are not affiliated to the church. The groups attend services in church on

special occasions, mainly Remembrance Sunday, and support church activities.

## Ecumenical Links

There are no other Christian churches in the parish although the Plymouth Brethren have a small centre near the recreation ground. There are long-term strong but informal links with St John's, Milford, largely demonstrated through shared Lent courses and Ash Wednesday and Ascension Day services, our shared support for The Chandler School, and the clergy providing cover for each other. The incumbent is the Patron of St John's, Milford and St Michael and All Angels, Thursley.

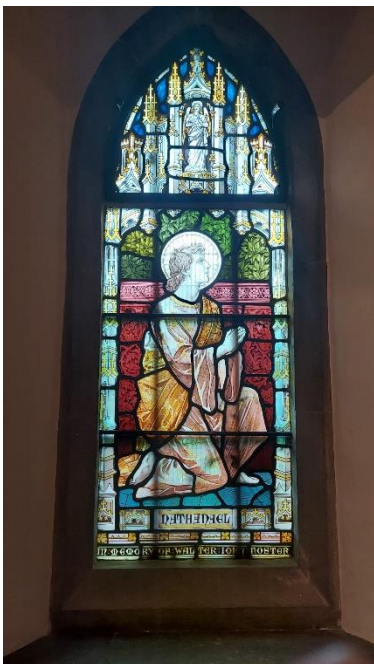
## Food Bank

We proactively support Godalming Food Bank, making regular large deliveries of food and other goods donated by our congregation, and liaising with them on items which are particularly needed.



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## 13 Finances



As would be expected, the parish finances are stretched and require careful management but are overall on a sound basis as a result of prudent housekeeping. There are no endowments or investments of any significance but the church members are just able “to pay their way”.

The PCC uses the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) as our preferred mechanism of planned giving. We now have 34 people giving through the PGS and a further 29 through the old method of standing order or bank transfer.

Stewardship campaigns are held regularly and we hold Gift Days each year which are usually very successful.

Although it is difficult to increase routine giving significantly, the parish has always been able to raise large sums for specific capital projects, which is fortunate as a 1,000 year old Grade I listed building soaks up money like blotting paper! This is largely due to enthusiastic and imaginative fund-raising work and the generosity of a few wealthy parishioners.

We aim for parish outward giving to home and overseas charities to be 10% of income, although in recent years this has had to be reduced.

### **The Church House Trust**

The Trust was set up in 1987 and owns the freehold of what was formerly the old School House, now known as the Church House, at Witley Infant School, including part of the playground in front of the building. The Parish Office is located on the school playground and the



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Church House is now leased to Surrey County Council for use by the school. The Trust receives rent under the lease and an additional licence fee for use of the playground in front. The Trust also receives annual dividends in respect of shareholdings.



The objects of the Trust allow (inter alia) for the income to be used for “the educational and other charitable work of the Church of England in the Parish of Witley”. In recent years the Trust agreed to fund the salary of a Children’s and Families’ Worker

for All Saints Church and to fund the Forest School Initiative for one year for Witley Infants School.



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## 14 The Vicarage



This is situated on the Petworth Road in the centre of the village, approximately a third of a mile from the church. The Vicarage is a good family house, built in 1939.

The accommodation downstairs comprises a large lounge, separate dining room, kitchen, utility room, cloakrooms and study. Upstairs there are four bedrooms and two bathrooms (one en-suite). The house is centrally heated. It has a modern kitchen and the windows are double glazed. The clergy study and additional cloakroom facilities are separate from the family area. There is a large enclosed garden (approx. 1/3 acre) with a single garage.



The Vicarage will be inspected by the Diocese and any necessary works carried out. The parish will redecorate where necessary.

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## 15 Godalming Deanery

**From the Area Dean of Godalming, Revd Chris Bessant, Rector of Haslemere**



It is my pleasure to be able to encourage, welcome and support those who are considering the parish profile for All Saints, Witley. I am well acquainted with the parish, and aware of all that the congregation and community have to offer their new Vicar. The Deanery of Godalming is a very pleasant place to live and serve alongside our brothers and sisters in Christ who serve across the parishes.

All Saints Witley is part of the Godalming Deanery, which has a total of 15 parishes and 20 churches. As well as stipendiary clergy we are blessed with some local ordained and self-supporting ministers, active retired clergy and a variety of licensed lay members. Within the Deanery, there are many different styles of worship on offer and each church has its own tradition.

The Deanery is a sought-after place to live, owing to the pleasant surroundings and the good communications and schools. There is a consistent arrival of new families looking to settle into the area, often with good intentions to become involved with the community.

The Clergy Chapter meets 10 times a year on Wednesday lunchtimes. As a mutually supportive Chapter, time is always given to discuss pressing matters from any of the parishes. We have a mix of business, invited speakers and sharing of news. Attendance is both good and expected. It is hoped that whoever is appointed to All Saints Witley would become a regular member of Chapter and play his or her part in the Deanery.

The Deanery Synod meets twice a year and offers a varied programme of reports from General Synod together with discussion on local issues related to the life of the churches and parishes.



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Should candidates wish to get in touch, I am very happy to have an informal chat about aspects of this parish profile or any other matter. I can be contacted at [Rector@HaslemereParish.org](mailto:Rector@HaslemereParish.org) or on 01428 658107.



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## 16 Conclusion

We hope you have enjoyed reading about All Saints Witley and that you have found what we can offer to our new incumbent of interest. Please do contact us if you would like more information.

Brenda and Christine

[churchwardens@allsaintswitley.org.uk](mailto:churchwardens@allsaintswitley.org.uk)



**Our vision is for All Saints to be the beating heart of a  
community filled with the love of God and love for God.**

***ALL SAINTS FOR ALL PEOPLE***

