



# Benefice Profile

*Serving Christ, Community and the Wider World*

## Welcome to the Diocese

Welcome to the Diocese of Rochester and thank you for your interest in this exciting opportunity to be the first Associate Minister of the newly formed Benefice of Crockham Hill and Westerham. You will help shape ministry across two historic parishes in a beautiful part of Kent. Working together with an established ministry team, you will play a key role in developing worship, growing both churches' engagement with younger and older members, and strengthening community outreach in a supportive environment.

### Our vision

As a Diocese we share the vision that we are Called Together **to change, serve and grow** the church across the areas of Medway, north and west Kent and the London Boroughs of Bromley and Bexley.

Much work has taken place to understand what these three themes mean for the life of the Diocese and our priorities, and to define what and where resources will need to be allocated to deliver them.

Through prayerful engagement and discernment, what has begun to emerge is an understanding that we are a community:

**Seeking first the Kingdom of God, and called together by God to change, serve and grow with compassion, courage and creativity.**

- **Change** is about the need for us to adapt in a changing world, so that our churches can play their full part in serving God and drawing people once more to faith in Jesus Christ.
- **Serve** is about the attitude we need to adopt if we are to earn and gain that cherished place in people's hearts and at the heart of our communities.
- **Grow** is about what God wants to bring about in us and through us, as people growing into the likeness of Christ, and as churches where people are being drawn to follow Jesus through our words and through our deeds.

### Our Objectives

Within this overall vision, our emerging key objectives are to *grow missional churches, with missional leaders and missional disciples*, that are:

Growing younger and more diverse,

Growing numerically, spiritually, financially and in impacting their communities, and in turn are

Creating a safe and healthy culture for all

This is the latest phase in developing our strategic plans, which are vital to our seeking to grow the kingdom of God across the areas of Medway, north and west Kent, and the London Boroughs of Bromley and Bexley.

Central to these plans is sustaining and growing a flourishing and well-resourced parish structure, so as to enable our local churches to take their full and rightful place at the heart of their communities: serving God and serving the people, loving God and showing his love in and to our communities.

If this vision excites you and you believe God may be calling you to this role, then we would love to hear from you.

With my prayers and best wishes,

*+Jonathan*

**The Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs  
Bishop of Rochester**

# Welcome/Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to read this profile. As you look through these pages, we hope that you will gain a flavour of our life here in Crockham Hill and Westerham and will want to join us as we set out on a new adventure as a united Benefice. Our two parishes have many things in common and are earnestly praying for God to send us an Associate Minister with the right gifts to help us grow into our new identity.

We are seeking somebody with a heart for rural and small-town ministry, who will enjoy sharing our life as we shape the life and vision of the new benefice.

This is an exciting time for both churches as we seek God's lead in becoming an ever-greater blessing to the communities around us. We really believe that the Holy Spirit has been at work to bring us together. We hope that as you read this profile, you will feel some of our excitement and want to learn more.

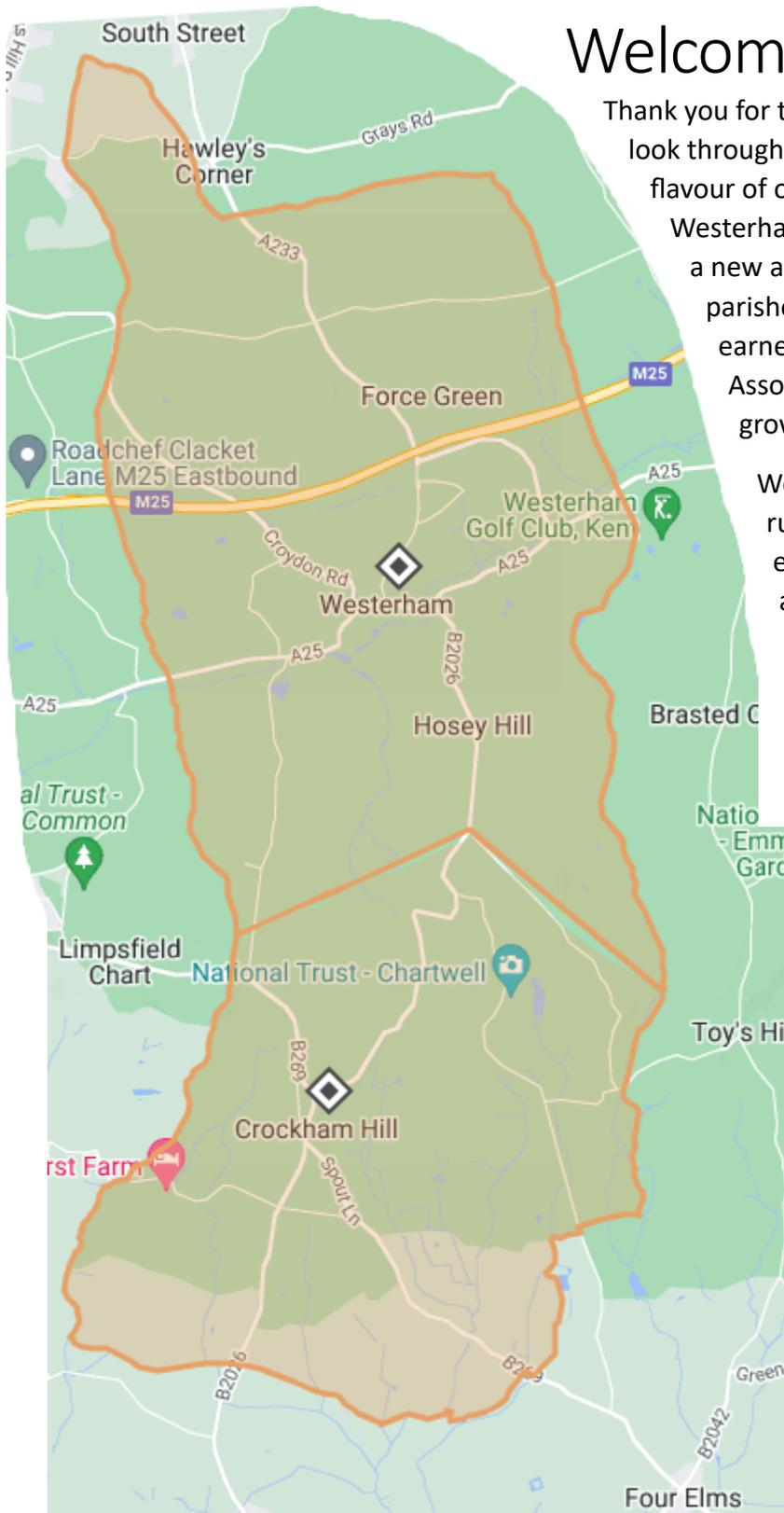
## The Landscape:

The town of Westerham and the village of Crockham Hill sit in the Sevenoaks district of Kent, approximately three miles apart, surrounded by beautiful countryside and steeped in history.

Westerham (with a population of around 4,000) was recorded as early as the 9th century and mentioned in the Domesday Book. Crockham Hill (with a population of around 650) lies on the line of the old Roman road from Lewes to London

Our communities are steeped in history.

The Royal Oak Pub in Crockham Hill is thought to be at least 500 years old and at one time had a 35 foot well providing water for pilgrims on their way to Canterbury. Chartwell House, where Churchill lived, and Hever Castle, the ancestral home of Ann Boleyn, are just a stone's throw away. The beautiful local landscape is a treasure trove for walkers wishing to explore the Weald or walk on the North Downs, with the Pilgrim's Way close by.





Westerham has a vibrant town centre with independent shops, restaurants and pubs, and is a thriving community with clubs and groups for all tastes, ages and levels of fitness.

Crockham Hill has a strong and welcoming sense of community, with the village hall, school, pub and church providing focal points for our shared life together. The Benefice Vicarage is in Westerham and there is a house available for the new minister in Crockham Hill but neither minister will focus on one

parish, and we will share the leadership of God’s ministry and mission across the benefice.

The nearest railway station to Crockham Hill is Edenbridge, with trains between Redhill and Tonbridge, while Edenbridge Town, Oxted and Sevenoaks stations are all within a few miles and provide mainline services to London. Westerham has regular bus services to Bromley and Sevenoaks.

Westerham and Crockham Hill both have Church of England primary schools enjoying close relationships with the church. At Crockham Hill, we are also fortunate to have a nursery school based in the village hall with strong links to the primary school and the church. There is a wide selection of good and outstanding schools in the area for secondary education. These include independent, grammar and state schools.

Demographically, we are rural communities in a relatively affluent area of the country and score quite low compared to the rest of the diocese and nation in terms of indicators of deprivation. This is not to say that there are no needs locally: Edenbridge and Westerham both have foodbanks supported by members of our churches and the wider community. In October 2023, Westerham Foodbank had 58 households registered, comprising 75 adults and 62 children. Nearly half of the households were single people. Since then, the number has continued to grow. At Churchill School in Westerham, a higher than average number of pupils qualify for the Pupil Premium. A genuine question for the new benefice is how successful are we being at representing our whole community within the gathered church?



## Who is our new minister?

### The Role

We seek somebody who will be excited to be the first person to hold this post, helping to shape ministry across the two parishes that make up the new Benefice of Crockham Hill and Westerham. You will work alongside Reverend David Fox-Branch, the Vicar; Reverends Alison Cooper and Wendy Harvey, both clergy with Permission to Officiate; our Ordinand, Jess Spinkernell; two gifted and committed PCCs and within the Diocesan vision, *Called Together*, based on the 5 Marks of Mission and expressed as “the Five E’s”:

- Evangelism
- Everyday faith
- Engagement with communities
- Equity
- Environment.

Dividing your time proportionately across the parishes you will share the leadership of regular, occasional and seasonal services and, as we discern God’s vision for the Benefice together, be willing to help develop

and lead new types and styles worship. You will engage with mission partners locally and outside the Benefice as we seek to show the love of Christ as we serve Him, our communities and the wider world.

You will share in the Benefice's work in the two local schools. You will be active in our wider pastoral care and outreach, and ideally have a particular focus either on engagement with younger people, including young adults, families and single people or on ministry and evangelism among older people in the area.

### The Person

We are praying for somebody with a deeply rooted spirituality. The worship of both churches is focused on the Eucharist so we are seeking somebody for whom the Sacrament is central to their walk with God but who is also able to experiment and lead new styles of worship as we seek to engage the whole community.

### Evangelistic

- You have a passion for sharing the good news and a creativity about presenting it in ways that enable it to be heard by people with differing needs and life experiences.

### Collaborative

- You understand the corporate nature of the ministry of the whole people of God and seek to nurture gifts and vocations for a 24/7 faith. You are comfortable taking different roles within a team according to your gifts and those of the people around you.

### Pastoral

- You have a loving heart for the needs of the world and will take an active role in the pastoral ministry of the Benefice. You are comfortable engaging with people of all ages and lifestyles and especially with coming alongside those in need. You are passionate about bringing the Kingdom near to those you encounter and dedicated to good safeguarding practice.

### Compassionate

- You have an inclusive understanding of the invitation of the Gospel, and a desire to see God's purposes of justice and love made visible in the life of the Church. You are a willing advocate for those who are less able to speak for themselves. You recognise that, in serving the wider community, we come near to Christ in those in need even as we bring Him near to them.

### Missionary

- You can commit to the 5 Marks of Mission, and to the Diocesan Vision, *Called Together*. You recognise the Christian vocation to be good stewards of God's creation and to advocate for a suffering world as the whole Creation waits for the reconciliation of Christ, seeking God's will for the work of the Church locally and further afield.

### What we can offer you

- Being part of a collaborative and supportive ministry team in a benefice where the churches are central to community life; with an opportunity to help to shape the life of that benefice in its early years.
- Administrative support and desk space at the Benefice Office in Westerham, with additional support from the Parish Administrator at Crockham Hill.
- Respect for the part time nature of your role, and for other commitments you may have, enabling you to establish a healthy rhythm of life.
- A home in a village with a strong sense of community, in a beautiful part of the world.

- The love and support of two caring congregations of talented people who wish to show God's love for the world.

## A Brief History of our Buildings

Both churches are open daily, loved and cared-for by many members of our local communities. Visitors, of which there are many, comment on the special atmosphere of each. Some of those visitors are simply passing through but others make special journeys to visit us.



*St Mary's from the air*

### St Mary's

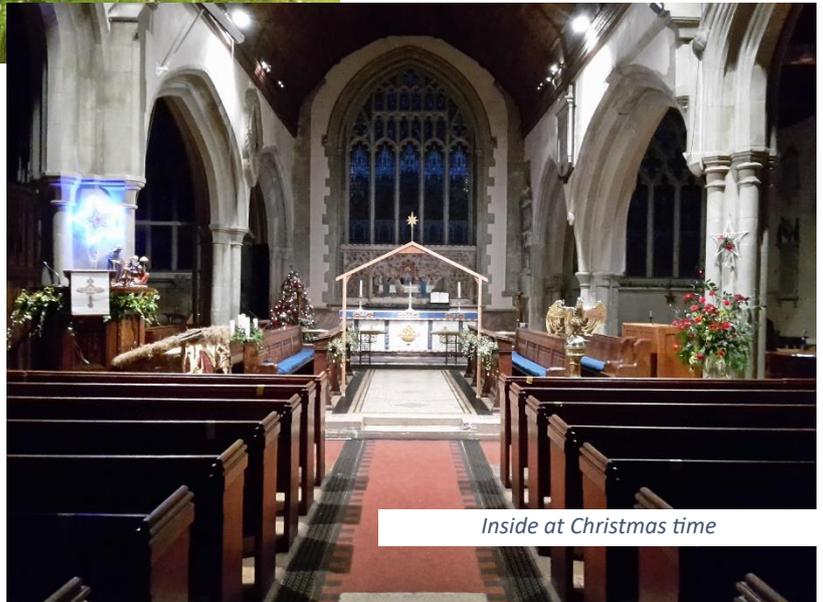
Sitting at the eastern end of a sandstone ridge, adjacent to The Green, St Mary's is at the centre of Westerham life.

Our Grade II\* listed Church building is up to 800 years old, but God has been worshipped here for well over 1000 years.

Much of what you see today is Victorian, with some earlier features preserved in the fabric of the building.

With beautiful stained glass; many historic features; and associations with John Fryth, General Wolfe and Winston Churchill, the building helps to draw people to the town whilst offering an oasis of calm and prayer to all.

The interior has undergone various changes over the years, and currently features fixed pews in the nave and chancel, with Sunday worship usually focused on the large High Altar, behind which the Oxford Movement reredos features a fine mosaic of the Last Supper.



*Inside at Christmas time*

A ring of eight bells hangs in the belfry, and there is an enthusiastic band of ringers. Most of our music is provided by our Lewis organ which is generally agreed to be of exceptional quality. We are currently raising money to completely refurbish it over the course of 2024-26.

The last major change was the re-ordering and re-dedication of the Resurrection Chapel around the turn of the Millennium, with the installation of an etched glass screen depicting Westerham through the ages.

Since the Covid pandemic, we have changed and adapted to differing needs, whilst always keeping our vision statement of *Serving Christ, Westerham and the wider world* at the centre of all we do. As an Eco Church working towards Net Zero, we have installed a new LED lighting scheme and are beginning to consider our energy needs for the future. We have a re-wilding scheme running in the churchyard and, in

2022, installed swift boxes in the tower. Our new Associate Minister will be involved in conversations about how we can best equip our building to continue to be our partner in mission and evangelism to all of God's children in the decades to come.

## Holy Trinity

Nestling into the hillside in the heart of Crockham Hill Village, overlooking the picturesque Kent countryside, sits Holy Trinity Church.

It was built in 1842 by the Warde family, who remain Patrons of both churches. The purpose of the new church was to serve the small settlement of Crockham Hill and especially the needs of estate and farm workers living locally, with churches in Westerham and Edenbridge being too far to easily attend on Sundays. Initially a daughter church of St Mary's, it became a parish in 1845.



*Holy Trinity Church*



*The nave*

Seating around 150 people, the nave is separated from the chancel by a carved oak screen and this, along with the pulpit, was given to the church as a memorial to the men of the village who served in the first world war.

Beyond the screen we find the Copeman Hart Organ consol and stalls for a small choir. The chancel houses the altar and features a reredos. Beside the altar is a memorial to Octavia Hill, the social reformer and cofounder of the National Trust. Octavia is buried with her sister in the beautiful, well-kept churchyard, which has recently been extended due to a gift of adjoining land.

In 2023 a new boiler and under-pew heating were installed, and the church has an updated lighting and sound system.

There is ample parking for visitors. The congregation is a mix of people who live in Crockham Hill and some who come from further away; Holy Trinity is regarded as a real asset to the community.

## Vision



We believe that Church is not just something attended on a Sunday; Church is a community of people coming together to worship God, sharing their gifts and abilities to encourage each other as they seek to make God known in the world and to live out that their faith seven days a week.

It is not just about doing things; it is about being or, perhaps, becoming: coming together to discover more about God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit – as he is revealed in the life, death and resurrection of Christ. It is about living out that risen life in the world as we try to grow in His likeness; deepening our faith in God the Holy Trinity; loving our neighbours near and far and caring for the whole of His creation as we daily make the Gospel invitation.

The Five Marks of Mission provide a framework for prayerfully imagining the future of our new Benefice, and our engagement with our local communities. These are embedded in the diocesan strategy, *Called Together*.

The two PCCs are working to develop a shared vision. Through the rest of 2024 and into 2025 we will be going on a shared congregational journey of vision and discipleship, bringing together our different experiences of ministry and mission to produce a lasting plan and vision for the whole Benefice as we seek to *serve Christ, community and the wider world*.

## Mission

### Eco Church

Rochester is an Eco Diocese. St Mary's is an Eco Church and close to achieving the Silver award. An active environmental group at St Mary's includes people from the wider community and will become benefice-wide. As the whole creation waits for the reconciliation of Christ, we believe that the 5<sup>th</sup> Mark of Mission should underpin our life and mission.

### Edenbridge Churches in Covenant (ECC)

ECC is a charity that represents all the churches in Edenbridge and surrounding villages (Westerham is a town in its own right). It was founded in 1982 by the Anglican, Roman Catholic, Baptist and United Reformed churches in Edenbridge. Holy Trinity and other local churches joined over time. At its founding, ECC was challenged to 'do together what should not be done separately.' Today, we support the Eden Christian Trust Youth Worker and Bridges Café in Edenbridge High Street. The café has, over time, become a significant channel for voluntary Christian service within the community.

### Relationships with Other Local Churches

Holy Trinity is the only church in Crockham Hill but as part of its outreach has had links with the inner London church of All Saints, New Cross. Westerham is home to RC and Congregational Evangelical churches, with good relationships among the



ministers and congregations. Members of the churches regularly cooperate, for example by organising fundraising events for Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees and Porchlight, the Kent homelessness charity. In 2024, the RC and Anglican churches in Westerham shared in the hosting of very well attended Lent Lunches providing fellowship, bible discussion and fundraising for Porchlight.

Sevenoaks Deanery is a friendly and supportive deanery with an active clergy chapter.

### Pastoral Team.

The Benefice Pastoral Team, comprising trained volunteers and ministers, offers pastoral support and visiting to those in need in our communities. The clergy are integral members of the team, offering support, prayer and guidance as the need arises as well as visiting at home and in hospital and arranging chaplaincy visits.

### Schools

There are two Church of England primary schools in the benefice. Members of the churches are involved in the life of both. It has been especially rewarding over the last academic year, to see pupils at Churchill School taking the initiative in offering prayers and taking a full part in worship.

We envisage that in the future this work will be coordinated across the benefice with a team of schools' volunteers supported by the clergy, and we hope that you would be interested in taking a lead role.

The Vicar and a member of St Mary's are Foundation Governors at Churchill, and we anticipate that the new minister will be willing to explore becoming one at Crockham Hill as, and when, a vacancy arises.

### Young people and Families

Although our schools work is undoubtedly planting faith among the pupil populations, both parishes are challenged by the low number of young people actively involved in our regular worship and we seek a creative response to this challenge. Holy Trinity has a well-established Family Service, and St Mary's has a new informal service on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday which incorporates elements of Messy Church with hymns, worship songs and fellowship. We hope that our new Associate Minister will help us to reinvigorate our offering for these groups.

## Opportunities and Challenges

### Westerham Place Care Home

Westerham Place Care Home is under new management and would like to renew its relationship with the local church. It is the only care home in the benefice. An active discussion is underway as to the best way of doing this, and we hope that you will want to be part of our mission to the residents there.

### Sevenoaks Churches Educational Trust (SCET)

St Mary's is one of 30 Sponsoring Churches that helped to establish Trinity Secondary School in Sevenoaks. Over the years, the link between St Mary's and the school weakened but there are opportunities at the moment to revitalise it. This would provide important continuity of church input in the lives of the young people who go there from Crockham Hill and Churchill Schools.

### New Housing

A large housing development on the edge of Westerham has been in the pipeline for some years despite local objections. It was rejected by the local authority this summer but the developer will probably appeal. If it goes ahead, it will significantly add to the population of the town and the Benefice will need to reach out to our new community members.



## Westerham Community Hub

Named after the Reformation Martyr John Fryth, the small hall at St Mary's – the John Fryth Room – is undergoing a transformation. It has been underused for some years but has now been redecorated to make a welcoming and practical space for modern groups, and rebranded 'Westerham Community Hub.' The Hub is home to Tuesday Coffee Time, which provides a welcoming and warm space to help reduce isolation and encourage friendships in a town where it is not cheap to go out for coffee and is gradually attracting more users. Coffee team is popular with people

who are not regular churchgoers and provides an important moment of contact between them and the Benefice.

At present, the space is regularly used by a local authority youth group, dance class and a jigsaw group; and occasionally for a local craft market and children's parties; as well as for church activities such as choir practices and Confirmation and First Communion classes.

We were pleased also, in 2024, to share the hosting of well attended Lent Lunches with St John's RC Church to provide a time of bible reflection and fellowship as we raised funds for the Porchlight homelessness Charity. Similarly, the hub is the venue for a Maundy Supper each year. We would like to see much more use of the space both for church activities and the wider community.

## Worship

### Regular Services

We have a rich worshipping life with most of our Sunday services being Eucharistic, and vestments usually worn.

We intend to have a number of shared services, and we hope that you will help to develop some of these. At present, Morning Prayer is offered at St Mary's every day except Monday, with a midweek Eucharist. Our Sunday worship looks like this:

Week	St Mary's	Holy Trinity
1	10.30 Holy Communion: CW Order 1 6.00 Choral Evensong	8.00 BCP Communion 10.00 Family Service of the Word
2	8.00 Communion: Order 2 in traditional language. 10.30 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday informal worship	10.00 Holy Communion: CW Order 1
3	10.30 Holy Communion: CW Order 1	8.00 BCP Communion (not at present) 10.00 Holy Communion: CW Order 1
4	8.00 Communion: Order 2 in traditional language. 10.30 Holy Communion: CW Order 1	10.00 Holy Communion: CW Order 1
5	10.30 Holy Communion: CW Order 1	10.00 Holy Communion: CW Order 1



'Come and Sing' Faure's Requiem on Holy Saturday

### Music Ministry

Music is an essential ingredient to our main acts worship, with sung settings for Eucharists, monthly Choral Evensong and a variety of traditional and more modern hymns and worship songs at other services.

We have hosted a number of community singing events in the last couple of years, reaching out to the wider community, and these have proved very popular.

Each church is supported by a Director of Music and a talented choir. St Mary's choir, under the leadership of Dan Eaton, robes for most services and Holy Trinity has an unrobed choir under the leadership of Graham Dinnage.

At St Mary's, an informal group of musicians and singers supports our 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday service, which has been running since the Summer of 2023, and a well-attended Evensong, often features additional choir members from surrounding

parishes plus guest organists. The choir recently sang at Southwark Cathedral, and we envisage more such trips in the future alongside increasing collaboration between the parishes as our music ministry continues to develop.

### Messy Church

Holy Trinity runs a well-supported Messy Church at Crockham Hill School on a termly basis. Until November 2023, St Mary's ran Messy Church on a monthly basis but numbers never recovered post-Covid. With our Messy Church leader having been ordained in June 2024 and a new informal service – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday – launched in the summer of 2023, the PCC decided that it was time to pause Messy Church for a season and focus on the new service.



We anticipate that the new benefice will provide the opportunity to offer a Benefice Messy Church or some other Fresh Expression as we move forward. Our new minister would be involved in that process.

### Family Service at Holy Trinity

The main service on the first Sunday of the month at Crockham Hill is a family service based on a Service of the Word. In recent years this has usually been lay led.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday

The main service at Westerham – not surprisingly, on the second Sunday of the month – offers a relaxed time of shared Word, prayer and praise. Each month has a different theme, from seasonal ones to Wholeness and Healing or exploring God's love in creation as we venture outside. The service is planned by a team of volunteers and the intention is that, ultimately, it will mostly be lay led. The service is non-Eucharistic with a short Communion following for those who want it, refreshments available throughout, and time provided for people to move around and try different prayer-based activities.

### Occasional Offices

These are precious moments, and we wish to maximise these opportunities to offer the love of God to the wider community.

Number of Occasional Offices & School Services at Each Church								
	2021		2022		2023		2024 <sup>1</sup>	
	St Mary's	Holy Trinity	St Mary's	Holy Trinity	St Mary's	Holy Trinity	St Mary's	Holy Trinity
School		2	3	5	4	4	4	3
Funerals	2	1	7	4	6	4	6	2
Memorials	3	1	6	4	1	2	1	2
Ashes	4	4	8	5	10	3	11	1
Baptisms	5	3	5	7	10	1	5	1
Confirmations					1			
Weddings	8		2	2	6	1	4	1
Blessings	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>11</b>

### Seasonal Services

Both churches have a rich annual round of well attended seasonal and special services with some, such as during Lent, being shared even before we became a benefice. You will be involved in helping to shape the pattern of these as the new benefice moves into its first full year.

### Our Congregations



The Benefice lies within easy commuting distance of London, so it is no surprise that our communities are among the more affluent in the country and diocese. There is deprivation but it is not immediately obvious on a visit to either place and, despite an inclusive ethos, it is probably fair to say that the poorer members of our communities are underrepresented in our

congregations. Widening the diversity of the worshipping community is one of the key tasks for the years ahead.

In 2023 the average Sunday attendance at St Mary's was 45 at Evensong, 38 at 10.30 and 14 at 8.00; the average at Holy Trinity was about 40 at the 10.00 service.

### Children

As with parishes in many places, we are challenged to ask to what extent our congregations reflect the local demographics. At Westerham we currently have 5 or 6 children regularly coming with their families on Sundays; this is beginning to rise for *Second Sunday* with school families getting involved. At Crockham Hill we have a couple of children regularly worshipping at our Communion services, and 3 or 4 at our Family Service.

<sup>1</sup> Based on services to date and planned and not including cremations or burials elsewhere, or collective worship at school.

## Our Ministry Team

We are a supportive and collaborative team, comprising the Vicar, two ministers with PTO and an ordinand, supported by the Directors of Music, who will be pleased to welcome you to the Benefice.



The Vicar, David Fox-Branch, was Priest in Charge of Westerham for almost three years before the formation of the Benefice. Before that he served in Epsom and Glastonbury. Revd Alison Cooper was Interim Minister at Crockham Hill until retirement and Revd Wendy Harvey, was a prison chaplain until 2022. She, like Alison, also has many years of experience in parochial ministry.

Jess Spinkernell joined us in September 2024 as Ordinand. Prior to selection for ordination, Jess was a Licensed Lay Minister in Tonbridge.

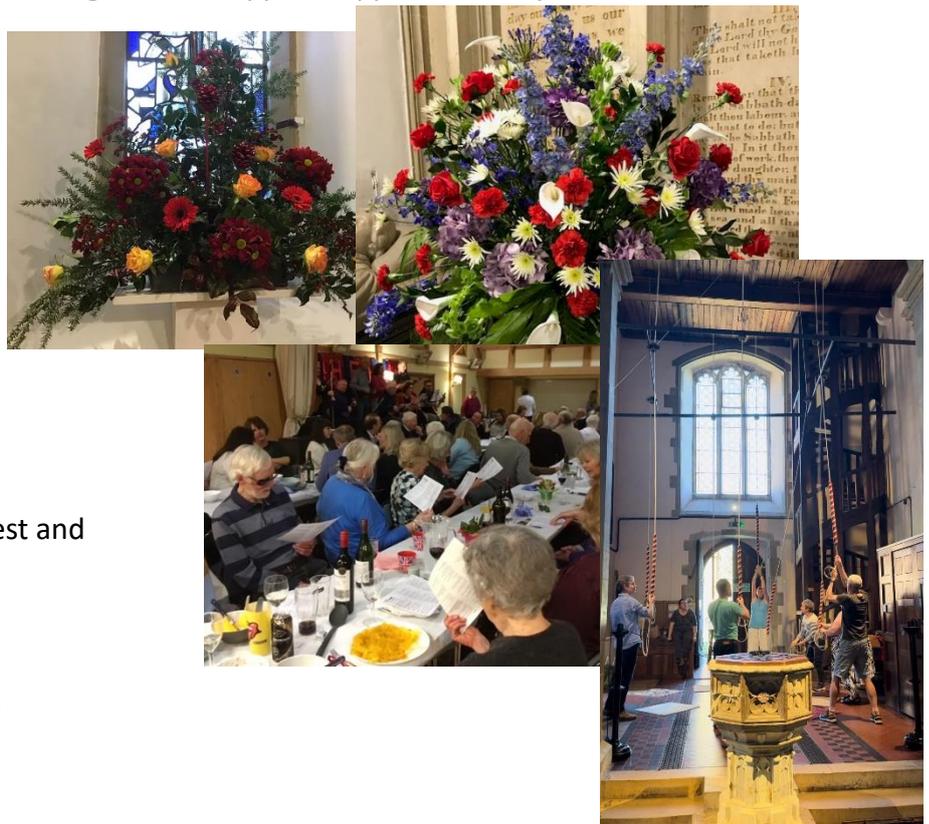
In 2024, we said goodbye to our LLM who was ordained in Derby, and we are actively praying for God to lift up one or two lay ministers from among our congregations. There is a real sense that God is at work among us.

The Ministry Team is well supported by a host of enthusiastic volunteers in both worship and pastoral work.

## The 24/7 Life of God's People in this Place

We believe in the ministry of the whole people of God as a collaboration and sharing in the Gospel. It is probably true to say that over half of our regular worshippers support the daily life of the benefice in some way, for example:

- Singers and musicians
- Flower Guild
- Pastoral Team
- Various committees
- Churchyard
- Cleaning and polishing
- Bellringers
- Environmental group
- Social media
- Social Committee
- Seasonal Meals such as Harvest and Maundy
- Lent Groups
- Prayer Group
- Distributing posters and fliers



And again, our members bring the gospel to the centre of community life through their engagement in the lives of the people around us. For example:



- Local foodbanks
- Almshouses
- Heritage Trust
- Edenbridge Churches in Covenant
- Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees
- MacMillan Coffee Mornings
- Scouts

- School governors
- Local Councillors
- Wildlife groups
- Park Run

- U3A
- Royal British Legion
- Westerham Amateur Dramatics Society
- The Westerham Society
- Westerham Town Partnership

## Governance

### Joint Council

The two parishes have voted to form a joint council to provide strategic leadership of the benefice. This will be chaired by the Vicar, with the Associate Minister an ex-officio member.

### PCCs

These will continue to meet but to manage local matters that need not go to the joint Council. The Vicar will be Chair of both, and the Associate Minister will be an ex-officio member of Crockham Hill and co-opted to Westerham but the meetings will usually be led by the respective Vice Chair; the stipendiary clergy will not be expected to attend unless there is a need for their presence.

### Finance

The accounts for both parishes are available. As with most benefices, we were hit by reduced income from Covid and then by the cost of living crisis. Each parish retains control over its own finances.

### St Mary's

We have significant historic reserves that provide investment income. In recent years, these have been used to support the running of the church but the PCC has been focusing on ways to return our finances to a more secure footing through a renewed focus on fundraising and grant applications.

St Mary's also has a Social Committee dedicated to fundraising through community events, and is supported by the St Mary's Westerham Heritage Trust, an independent charity which raises funds for capital works in the church and churchyard that safeguard or enhance heritage features. The annual Christmas Tree festival, run by the Trust, draws visitors from across the Southeast.



Since 2022, successful fundraising has enabled us to instal a new LED lighting system, redecorate the John Fryth Room as Westerham Community Hub, replace the churchyard gates and complete Phase 1 of our organ works but the real challenge lies, as with all churches, in funding revenue costs against the long-term trend for reduced congregational giving. We have joined the Parish Giving Scheme, produced a fundraising appeal to the whole community, and are part of a pilot project called *Cornerstone* which provides a fundraising dashboard for parishes.

### Holy Trinity's

Our finances are supported by a number of people who sign up to planned giving over the course of each year. In addition, fundraising and grants have supplemented the donated income to ensure that annual expenditure is covered, that sums are set aside for the provision of ongoing repairs and that the church's away-giving programme is affordable. The church does not have significant historic reserves but has a policy of retaining unrestricted reserves of at least half the normal annual running costs and, to date, this has been achieved fairly comfortably.

Over the past five years a restricted 'Friends Fund' has been established to meet the costs of exceptional building repairs and improvements, this being funded by people who may or may not be regular worshippers but consider the church to be an important feature of Crockham Hill's landscape. This has enabled the installation of CCTV, the replacement of an aged lightning conductor and obsolete central heating boiler, as well as the introduction of under-pew heaters.

Having regard for the ageing congregation and decline in church attendance, a fundraising appeal to the wider community and a legacy giving scheme are currently planned.

### Accommodation

An attractive three-bedroom house is provided for the Associate Minister in Crockham Hill, close to the village centre, Church and school. Built in the 1970's and acquired by the diocese in the 1980's, it has an easily maintained garden with raised beds, a single garage and parking for two or more additional cars.



The split-level living room/diner has an open fireplace, and the master bedroom features French windows opening onto a large balcony. There is also a modern kitchen and utility room, downstairs WC and a study.

We recognise, however, that you may already have accommodation and we would be happy to have a conversation about what best suits our combined needs.

### Who to contact

To arrange an informal conversation or visit, please email or call the Vicar, Revd David Fox-Branch on 01959 563127 or Revd Nick Cornell, Associate Archdeacon of Tonbridge, on 01892 616128.