

PARISH PROFILE 2017

Keston Parish Church,

London Borough of Bromley, Diocese of Rochester

Church Road, Keston, BR2 6HT

<http://www.kestonparishchurch.org.uk/>



KESTON PARISH CHURCH is looking for a new incumbent

Following the resignation (to take up a new post) of our full time incumbent of the last four years, we are looking for a new Rector to lead our congregation. While we are open-minded about the personal qualities needed for successful ministry, we would hope that, for Keston, they would include the following:

- Energy and an out-going personality, with an ability to enliven and rejuvenate, but not alienate constituent parts of the congregation or Keston community.
- A spiritual leader of faith, who can rise to the challenge of making the teachings of Jesus relevant to today's world and the requirements of its people.
- An appreciation of the values and merits of an inclusive leadership style, while possessing the ability to delegate.
- An understanding and willingness to practise pastoral care in the 21st century.
- An interest in, and willingness to engage with, our Church of England primary school.



KESTON – THE PARISH AND THE COMMUNITY

Keston is a small community in the rural commuter belt of South East London, approximately 13 miles from Central London and part of the London Borough of Bromley. It has about 1,100 households and approximately 2,700 inhabitants, of whom 74 are on the Electoral Roll of Keston Parish Church.

Keston consists of mainly detached family houses around a common land Green with two pubs and a restaurant, woodland and some farmland, as well as the well-known Keston Ponds. The church is situated in the centre of the historical and geographical parish footprint, where the ancient centre of Keston, originally dating back to Roman times existed, and about a mile south of today's village centre; here the Post Office and four shops enhance the village character.

The Parish is also home to the Keston Church of England Primary School within the village and a large, boys' Secondary School, Ravens Wood, is located directly adjacent to the Parish's northern boundary. Other good schools, including 2 grammar schools, are within fairly easy access in Bromley, and neighbouring boroughs.

The community can be described as mainly affluent, with a mix of younger families and older people. In the last census the retired population, at 800, outnumbered the children under 16, at 422.

The casual, social life of the community is centred around the common, with its two pubs, restaurant and the shops, while the different clubs and associations, (including the Women's Institute, Residents Association, Friends of Keston Common group), make much use of the Keston Village Hall, and our Keston Parish Church Hall. The local groups organise an annual Countryside Day on the common, which is popular with residents and visitors from all over the Borough.

Bromley, Hayes and Orpington stations, all within easy reach, allow speedy access to Central London, which is approximately 30 minutes away.



THE CONGREGATION OF KESTON PARISH CHURCH

The regular congregation could be described as “middle of the road”, enjoying the comfort of the familiar, but open to new ideas and changes where it is appropriate. The P.C.C., with 14 members, works well together and, working within a committee structure, is supportive of its Rector.

WORSHIP

On Sundays –

8.00 am. Said Communion. Book of Common Prayer.

1st and 3rd Sundays only, with a small, regular following.

10.00 am. Holy Communion. Common Worship Order One. With Robed choir.

Average attendance at this service, (not including Festivals when it is higher) is 73, with gently rising numbers over the past year.

On the first Sunday of the month the service is non-Communion, especially for the family.

On the third Sunday we offer Prayer for Healing and Wholeness during Communion.

We would like to reinstate the midweek service which has been suspended during the Interregnum.

The Choir

We are proud of our adult three part choir of some dozen members that sings at the 10 am service where they often offer an anthem and special music during Communion.

First Sunday Worship is led by an informal singing group who often introduce new songs to the congregation.



Children and young people

In order to provide outreach to young children and their families in the Parish, instead of Sunday School, a dedicated group of helpers has initiated Messy Church. This happens twice per term after school and is steadily gaining popularity with 32 children at the Christmas event, and 36 most recently.

The annual Christingle service is very well supported, with over 58 children and 102 adults present in 2016.

TEACHING

Children

Keston Church of England Primary School has a welcoming school community that values the Church's involvement. As a result, it has been a tradition of the Parish for the incumbent to be on the governing body and closely involved. A weekly assembly led by the Rector has been well received by children and staff. The church "hosts" an end-of-primary-school service for leavers from Year 6 every July, and is involved with the school's Carol Service at Christmas. The school is relatively small with usually just a one-form intake.

Adults. During Lent, we have enjoyed weekly teaching and discussion meetings.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Currently we enjoy monthly prayer walks, meditation evenings, a book reading fellowship and a Christian library.

FELLOWSHIP (Parish Life)

An active social committee organizes events throughout the year on a fairly regular pattern, some of which are fund-raising enterprises. There is a Harvest Supper, a Beating-the-Bounds walk with tea, themed social get-togethers, quizzes - all very cohesive and well supported by church members and the wider community. A recent introduction has been occasional 'Parish breakfasts', served between the two Sunday morning services. Pub Socials have been started to encourage partners who are not regular attenders at church. We also have a LIFT group,(Ladies in Fellowship Together), and a Men's group to encourage regular meetings for social enjoyment.

ADMINISTRATION

The Parish does not employ any administrative assistance, relying on the supporting skills of congregation members for secretarial and treasurer services, while paying for Hall management, cleaning and some upkeep of the grounds. Church cleaning and some grounds work are undertaken by volunteers.

MINISTRY PROVISION

We are fortunate to have a Licenced Lay Minister and a Pastoral Assistant.

OUTREACH

Parish Magazine

Edited by a dedicated steadfast member of the congregation, with contributions from local people and material from other sources, this is published by the Church and distributed without cost to all households in the Parish with a circulation of 1,280. As well as church activities, it reflects the wider interests of the village and surrounding areas, and is clearly valued by its readership, since annual requests for financial contributions towards its production costs bring in a substantial sum, and with these, and some advertising, it covers its costs.

AA and CA

We host both Alcoholics and Cocaine Anonymous groups

Our church web site <http://www.kestonparishchurch.org.uk/> is updated weekly.

Deanery synod

At present, the parish sends one representative to synod meetings.

THE PARISH BUILDINGS

The Church and Hall (Church Road, Keston, Kent BR2 6HT)



Our Church building is small (seats around 100) and parts date back to medieval times. It is simple, ancient, intimate and lovely in our eyes. It is surrounded by an old churchyard, which is now closed, but retains a plot for the burial of cremated remains. The church hall, built twenty five years ago, is attached to the church with access through the south doorway. It has a modern, well-equipped kitchen, storage space for

chairs, tables etc., toilet facilities, together with a choir vestry and Upper Room, with more storage space, reached by a spiral staircase. The Main Hall and Upper Room have regular users. These include exercise classes, singing groups and A.A. and C.A. meetings, as well as Church events. There are also frequent children's parties at the weekends. The various hirers contribute to the income of the church. The last quinquennial inspection in 2012 found the fabric of the buildings, on the whole, in excellent condition, with some remedial work required on damp patches to walls in the church, preliminary surveys are now underway.

A summary of the history of our church and the building and its features is available on our website.

The Rectory at 24 Commonside, has just been sold and the Diocese are currently negotiating the purchase of a newer property in The Dale, pictured below.



FINANCE

The church finances have recently been difficult, due to reduced income and this has resulted in the temporary suspension of our target of donating 10% of our unrestricted income to charitable causes every year. Following a review of regular giving and other recent donations we have been able to build up restricted reserves, rebalance the books and now have adequate funds to cover even major structural repairs, as they become necessary in the future.

A copy of the P.C.C.'s 2016 report and statutory accounts is available on request.

THE FUTURE

It is the profound wish of all the Keston Parish Family that our church should continue to proclaim the Christian message to future generations of inhabitants of the area, with vigour and inspiration, offering the pastoral care and support enabled by our faith in a loving God, and that we should find a leader to direct and assist us in this purpose.

Perhaps best summed up by our Vision Statement:

To welcome and embrace all who come into this beautiful ancient place of peace to be blessed, healed and equipped by God for the challenges of everyday life.