



# St Mark's Church

## Biggin Hill



**Parish Profile**

# Contents



- Archdeacon's Welcome
- Our Mission Statement. Who we are
- Ministry and Leadership Team
- Aspirations. The Person and the Role
- Worship. Home Groups
- Children and Young People
- Safeguarding
- Links with St George's RAF Chapel
- The Buildings. The Church Hall
- Our Parish
- Pastoral Care. Prayer. Bereavement group
- Outreach
- Finance
- Summary. How to Apply
- Appendix 1: The History of the Moving Church
- Appendix 2: Diocese of Rochester- Our Vision

# Archdeacon's Welcome



Thank you for taking the time to prayerfully consider whether God might be calling you to serve as Priest-in-Charge of St Mark's, Biggin Hill.

This parish has a committed congregation with aspirations to grow, especially in their ministry with children and families. The warm and friendly congregation of St Mark's are praying for a prayerful, collaborative Priest-in-Charge who will lead them in mission and ministry.

Biggin Hill is a small town with a village feel, located on the edge of the London Borough of Bromley. It provides easy access to both London and Kent, with beautiful countryside right on the doorstep. The church is part of the friendly and supportive Orpington Deanery.

The living is currently suspended to allow for the possibility of future pastoral reorganisation, but my hope is that this parish can be strengthened to reach its full potential and that the suspension can be lifted.

This is an exciting time in the life of the Diocese of Rochester as we reflect on how we, as a diocese and in different ways in each of our parishes, might Change and Serve and Grow so that God's Kingdom can be increased and more people may come to know the love of Christ. Our diocesan strategy prioritises and supports parish ministry and clergy well-being. We are committed to supporting mission and ministry in rural and suburban communities.

Please be assured of my prayers as you discern whether you are the person the Holy Spirit is calling to join us in this next exciting stage of mission and ministry in Biggin Hill.

**Ven. Allie Kerr,  
Archdeacon of Bromley and Bexley**

# Our mission statement



*Moving forward with God and  
reaching out to make Christ  
known*

Thank you for taking the time to read our Parish Profile.

St Mark's, Biggin Hill, is a church full of love and kindness, of prayer and care.

We believe that God will call someone to come and lead us, and to share in all that we do. Could this be you?

## Who are we?

We are a mixed group of people from a range of backgrounds. All age groups are represented, but the majority are retired people.

We encourage as many people as possible to take an active part in the life of the Church, doing what they are most comfortable with — music, hospitality, prayer, maintenance, pastoral care, and much more. Different people have contributed to our profile, and this reflects the joint approach we have

There is a real sense of belonging in this church, and a warm welcome awaits anyone who comes along to see our activities — and hopefully join us. We currently have 120 people on our electoral roll.



# Aspirations- Where we want to be by 2030

- To see more people joining us on our journey of faith, especially young families.
- To create more home groups.
- To strengthen links with local schools, and with our baby and toddler group.
- To progress to Silver and eventually Gold level as an Eco Church.
- To hear the church bells ring again, as legal and safety issues are currently preventing them from ringing.
- To develop and extend worship and community participation in the church.
- To improve our financial position, so that through careful planning and due diligence we can return to more generous away-giving and our designated Parish Share.

We foster an openness to adapt and try new things and all of this, led by a thriving ministry team, will ensure that St Mark's Church continues to serve Christ and His community in Biggin Hill.

We look forward to the possibility of meeting you.

**Lynn Hussey**  
**Member of PCC and Standing Committee**



*"Inclusive, welcoming and gospel driven. A spiritually healthy congregation, a well maintained building, a focus to keep growing and sharing". Andrew*



# The Person and The Role

## THE PERSON

### We are praying for a person who will:

- Have a strong, biblically based faith, with a desire to bring the church family a greater understanding of the Christian faith and how to relate it to daily life.
- Be prayerful and keen to develop the prayer life of the congregation.
- Be able to work collaboratively with others.
- Be experienced in enabling others in their discipleship.
- Be a practical leader.
- Be comfortable leading a wide range of worship styles.
- Have a sense of humour.

## THE ROLE

### You will be:

- Welcoming a congregation that reflects our community – multicultural, mixed ages, and families.
- Working with a team to establish a youth group.
- Creative in extending our use of the church space and its facilities.
- Working to enable our bells to ring out once more.
- Steadfast in working with the PCC to facilitate our ability to return to generous away giving and our full Parish Share.
- Ready to work with an enthusiastic ministry team to develop opportunities for others to lead.

# The Ministry and Leadership Team

**Our aim at St Mark's is to encourage members of the congregation to become involved in the life of the church, and to take responsibility for the worship, outreach, and fellowship provided.**

You will be working alongside, and supported by, our two churchwardens, an assistant churchwarden, and our paid, part-time, parish administrator, who together form the basis of the practical administration and organisation of worship.

There are numerous members of the congregation who are actively involved in services — from preparing the intercessions to providing refreshments, doing the readings, and giving a warm welcome to all. Many also take part in organising and planning church activities and outreach.

Currently, there are five of us who have completed the Hearing and Speaking God's Word course and are therefore able to speak in church and lead worship. This training was completed at St Mark's, and we are keen for you to continue this practice. One of those who trained with us is currently a Licensed Lay Minister in training, and we are very blessed that she has chosen to develop her commitment in this way. From this group, we also have a team that prepares and delivers the All Age Worship service each month, and they form the basis of the laying on of hands provided at Communion.



*"Welcoming and lively. My faith is made stronger by attending St Mark's and Home Group. There is always a supportive congregation." Sandra*

We have a team to ensure the technology side works seamlessly. We began to livestream during the COVID lockdown and have not looked back since.



We currently have a verger who is available to attend weddings, funerals and the burial of ashes in our Memorial Garden.



We are blessed to have a very experienced Treasurer who is meticulous in ensuring that the accounts are well presented and up to date.

Our aim is to involve as many people as possible in the daily life and activities of the church, enabling them to share their faith, friendship, and support, and to continue growing in their own belief.

### **Caroline Budimir Churchwarden**



*"We are a very welcoming church. We look after our senior members and welcome new families. We feel we belong and want others to feel the same way.  
Trust in each other."*

*Peter*

# Worship

**Our main weekly service takes place on Sundays at 10:30 am. Our current service pattern comprises an All Age Family Service on the first Sunday of each month, with Parish Communion on the remaining Sundays. The Parish Communion services are live streamed, attended by an average of fifty five people each week and watched by over 40 people.**



Our services follow common worship with a mix of hymns and worship songs led by our keyboard player and a choir.

Our monthly All Age Service is designed to enable the whole church family – from the youngest to the oldest – to worship together. It is more informal and is planned and organised by a team of three. The emphasis is on participation by the congregation, with a more lively style of worship .

*"A simple faith that Christ is here with us in St Mark's. We are a family; we look out for each other and welcome newcomers." Stephanie*

We value our inclusive atmosphere and actively encourage everyone to take part in our worship. Average attendance at this service is currently around forty. The music is led by our Worship Band, and we would love to widen our musical support further. Whilst we call it All Age Worship, we do not yet have regular attendance from many young people and families – something we would very much like to change.

Those who prefer a more traditional Communion service attend St George's Chapel on All Age Sundays.

Our Midweek Communion takes place on Wednesdays at 10 am, using the Common Worship format. This quiet, reflective service is especially valued by senior members of the church, those who prefer a said service, and those unable to attend on Sundays. Average attendance is around twelve. All of our services are followed by an opportunity to stay for coffee, tea, and biscuits, offering time for conversation, friendship, and support.

Beyond our regular weekly worship, we also hold a variety of special services throughout the year that connect with and support our wider community. For example, the All Souls Service offers reflection and comfort to those who have experienced loss. It is well attended by both regular worshippers and many others from the local community who find it a valuable part of their remembrance and healing.



Our Christingle Service on Christmas Eve has become so popular that we now hold two services to accommodate everyone – welcoming over 300 people each year. It has become a much-loved part of Christmas in Biggin Hill: it's what people do on Christmas Eve!

*"Friendly and flexible in its type of services. We have an active singing group to enhance our worship." Richard*

Biggin Hill is renowned for its contribution to the Second World War, when the RAF base here played a key role in the defence of Britain. Remembrance Sunday sees St Mark's, together with the local councillors and community organisations such as the Guides and Scouts, serving as a centre for worship and preparation before the service at the local War Memorial. During the COVID lockdown, members of the congregation crocheted and knitted over 400 poppies to create a beautiful display in honour of the occasion — now proudly displayed each year in the church.



## Home Groups

Home Groups form the heart of St Mark's. They are places where friendships are built, relationships with God are deepened, and members are equipped for Christian life. In Home Groups, people meet together to live out the life of God. Our groups offer a place to belong, to be known, and to become rooted in the life of the church.

We currently have four groups, which mainly meet fortnightly in people's homes — some in the evening, others during the day. During Lent, the groups often come together to follow a particular Lent course and share in discussion; recently, we hosted a series of films in the church as part of this.

### **Chris Walker-Musical Director/ Choir Leader**

*"We have a solid faith based on the Good News of Jesus Christ. It is an inclusive faith welcoming all. Worship is eclectic, combining modern with traditional." Chris.*

# Children and Young People

We recognise that there is room for growing our ministry with children, young people and families. We have a children's area (a self-service crèche) within the congregation to enable families to attend all our Sunday services. We are a child-friendly church and are happy to live with a little noise!



There are three schools in Biggin Hill – two primary and one secondary. Our local secondary school, Charles Darwin School, holds its annual Christmas Concert at St Mark's Church. This may be partly due to the excellent acoustics and new lighting facilities, but perhaps also because, for the past ten years, the concert has coincided with our Christmas Tree Festival, making the church an even more beautiful place to celebrate.



St Mark's also has links with a local school in nearby New Addington. Weekly sessions are held in the church to teach knitting – an activity that sparks lively conversation among children, staff, and church volunteers alike. The group produces items for charity, including many little scarves! The school's junior choir and steel band have also performed at our annual Christmas Fair, and they hold their Christmas service in the church.

Our Baby & Toddler Group for 0–5-year-olds runs every Monday morning during term time, welcoming an average of thirty carers and children through our doors. For many families, this is their first – and in some cases only – contact with St Mark's. We would like to use this opportunity to support more families, helping them become part of our church community.

## Safeguarding

**Safeguarding is taken very seriously by the leadership at St Mark's and is fully supported by the congregation.**

We maintain a Parish Dashboard to help us stay on track and are currently at Level 3. All of our volunteers have willingly completed the required safeguarding training modules appropriate to their roles. There are currently over sixty-five members of our church who have received safeguarding training, and all DBS checks are kept fully up to date.

A small team assists the Parish Safeguarding Officer in ensuring compliance with Safer Recruitment procedures. Our current project focuses on increasing the number of leaders who can deliver Home Communion to our elderly and housebound members.

One of our most popular practices has been to host our own safeguarding training sessions in a home setting, offering coffee and cake to create a friendly and relaxed atmosphere that encourages discussion. These sessions have been very well received, although some people still prefer to complete their requirements individually online.

### **Stephanie Peacock - Safeguarding Officer**

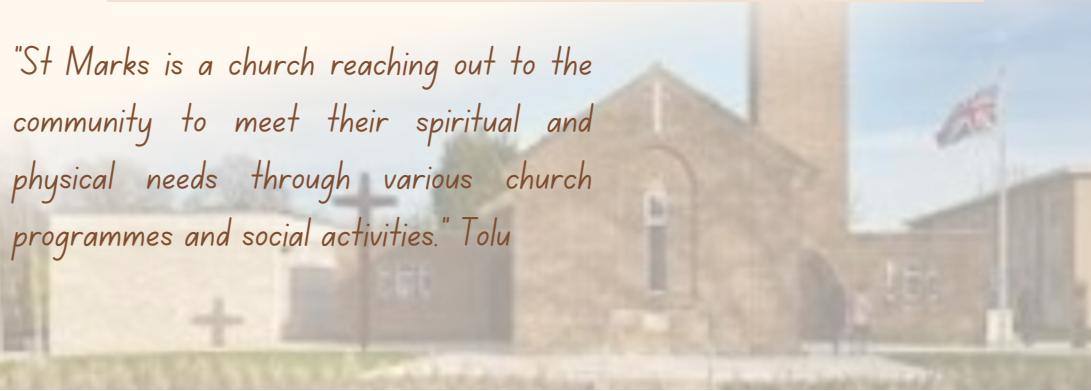


# Links with St George's RAF Chapel



Since September 1951, the incumbent at St Mark's has also been appointed as the Chaplain to St George's RAF Chapel. They have taken one service per month and, over the last six years, have been responsible for supporting and working with the ministry team who serve the Chapel. The Chapel has also been supported by both past and present Licensed Lay Ministers. The average Sunday morning congregation is around fifteen people.

*"St Marks is a church reaching out to the community to meet their spiritual and physical needs through various church programmes and social activities." Tolu*



# Buildings



St Mark's Church was dedicated in 1959 and is famous for being known as 'The Moving Church'. It is a Grade II listed building and we are proud of the heritage we have inherited. Not only are we a moving church in tradition and worship, but we also have significant aims and objectives, while preserving that heritage, to modernise our facilities and respond to changing social, economic, and environmental demands on the building infrastructure. The recently completed refurbishment of the church lighting system to an integrated and programmable LED lighting array, with new pendant and spotlight fittings, has enabled us to create new and dedicated lighting arrangements for a very wide variety of uses, ranging from our traditional worship to concerts and exhibitions, craft fairs, recitals and school and community events within the nave structure. The church benefits from Wi-Fi and a loop system along with a modern Audio Video system and provides live stream and recorded services for all occasions including well-hidden projection and electronic screens in the church.

Adjacent to the Church is a Tower, where we have six bells and a dedicated ringing team. The Tower is currently out of commission due to damage caused by the telecoms company who rent the roof top for mast and transmission equipment. We are currently collaborating with them to make the necessary repairs and exploring options to relocate the equipment from the rooftop, which we hope to accomplish over the next fiscal year (at their expense).



Behind the Church and linked to it, is a large church hall building which has a commercial kitchen, toilets and two meeting rooms together with other disabled person accommodation.

We also provide a beautiful, well maintained, and private Garden of Remembrance to the eastern side of the nave which is a popular quiet and contemplative setting for all those who have loved ones interred and at rest in the garden.



To the rear of the site, there is a well-proportioned four-bedroom family vicarage with a separate study, a large double garage, and a good-sized garden, providing private and well-screened accommodation.

As a facilities team we operate a Monday morning general works group, undertaking maintenance and repairs, compliance matters as well as overseeing contractors and engineers visiting the building. We are also working on future improvements to the building, including Solar panel and environmental control to enhance our current Bronze Eco Rating.



**Andrew Scott- Member of the technical support team and general works group.**

# Church Hall

Our church hall complex is an established community hub for many local organisations. It has disabled access and excellent facilities, including a main hall, a separate lounge area, a large well-equipped kitchen, a meeting room, and office accommodation — all with access to Wi-Fi.

On two days each week, the premises are used by Biggin Hill Community Care Association as a Day Centre for older people. This helps to support those experiencing physical disability, isolation, frailty, early-stage dementia, and carers needing respite from their caring role. On Wednesdays, BHCCA provides a lunch club for the over-50s and an art club in the afternoon.

Other regular hall users include our Baby and Toddler Group, Brownies and Guides, exercise classes, yoga, Slimming World meetings, and dog training. The local Horticultural Society holds three shows each year and monthly Gardeners' Evenings. Once a month, our local Primary Care Network hosts a Health and Wellbeing Café for the over 65's, promoting mental and physical health and giving guidance about local healthcare services. It is extremely well attended by members of the community. On Saturdays and Sunday afternoons, the hall is often booked for birthday parties for children of primary school age and younger.

## Chris Reeks

### Parish Administrator



# Our Parish

The Parish with a population of 12,018 (2021 census), covers a large geographical area with housing surrounded by open countryside, bordering greenbelt, with numerous walks. Although technically a small town, many residents still refer to it as a village. It lies at the far edge of the London Borough of Bromley, bordering Kent and Surrey and sits inside the M25, within a few miles of three junctions (4,5 & 6).

The nearest railway stations are Bromley South and Orpington (approx. 20-25 minutes away by road), which have connections to the coast and quick links into central London, (around seventeen miles away). Good bus links connect Biggin Hill to Bromley, Orpington and New Addington where there is a tram link to Croydon.

A significant physical feature of Biggin Hill is 'the valley' and 'the top', each area served by local shops, the majority of which are situated at the top along the High Street. These include a Waitrose, Tesco Express, Costa, and a selection of independent businesses. There are Chinese and Indian restaurants in the area and several pubs/restaurants in the locality.



Biggin Hill is mainly residential but there are some industrial activities adjoining the airport, including the home of Formula 1. The housing is mixed in age and size and is almost all privately owned/rented. Approximately 20% of the population are aged under 18 and 23% are over 65, the latter living both in their own homes and in retirement flats.



Amenities in Biggin Hill (apart from doctors, dentists and vets), include a modern library and swimming pool complex which is situated opposite the church. There is a large recreation ground near the church where the annual Biggin Hill Carnival takes place. (Adjacent to the recreation ground are allotments and Biggin Hill Cemetery.) Other leisure facilities (including a gym) are available at Charles Darwin School, outside of school hours. There is a private golf course nearby.



Apart from St George's RAF Chapel, other churches in the Parish are St Theresa's Catholic Church, the New Life Church and Westerham Hill Baptist Church.

There are two local primary schools: Oaklands Primary Academy and Biggin Hill Primary School. Charles Darwin School, a secondary school, is also located within the parish. Nearby Orpington is home to St Olave's Grammar School for boys and Newstead Wood School, a selective state school for girls. In Bromley, there is Bishop Justus Church of England School, a non-selective secondary school. All of these schools have co-educational sixth forms.

**Chris Reeks**  
**Parish Administrator**

# Pastoral Care

We have a dedicated Pastoral Team made up of a small group of caring church members who meet to pray, visit, and support those in need within the congregation.



## Prayer

We believe that prayer works. Prayer is at the heart of church life, and a small group meets monthly to pray for individuals, local and church challenges, and the persecuted Church. An email prayer chain also keeps members informed of any immediate needs. Prayers for healing are offered to the congregation during Parish Communion.

## Bereavement Group

A group of people who have been bereaved through the loss of a spouse meet monthly in the church for mutual support and comfort. Several members attend church services occasionally, finding this group an invaluable source of friendship and understanding.



*"Happiness in faith. Remembering those we love but no longer with us." Tony.*

Funeral ministry is a vital part of our mission to our local community- something we would want the priest in charge to continue to develop. Our Lay Minister in training, also plans to be a part of this ministry.





"We had a wonderful service, thank you to all of you for making ourselves and our friends and family so welcome." *Baptism Family*

## Outreach

**Our aim at St Mark's is to connect with our local community, demonstrating the love of Christ in action and showing that we are warm and welcoming.**

Our vision is for our congregation to reflect the make-up of the Biggin Hill community.

Currently, members of our congregation give time and support to local organisations, including Biggin Hill's Community Care Association, local Girl Guiding groups, the Biggin Hill Residents' Association, and the Women's Institute. Our Licensed Lay Minister in training serves as Padre for the RAF Air Training Corps 2427 Squadron at Biggin Hill, which has over one hundred serving cadets aged between 13 and 19.

We have also joined annually with the Local Residents' Association to raise money and celebrate together through a variety of music, dance, and shared meals.

St Mark's is an 'open house'. We have hosted an extensive range of events, including concerts, art exhibitions, a moving model event, and both baptism and wedding festivals.

We also have a YouTube channel, and our website – while providing information on activities – gives access to previously live-streamed Communion services. We believe that an improved online presence can only enhance our impact on modern society.



## The Moving Church News

### Biggin Hill Carnival

For a number of years, St Mark's has hosted a stall at the annual Biggin Hill Carnival. This involves an activity that encourages people to reflect on what is important to them, promoting discussion and contact with those who might not otherwise engage with our members.



One of our congregation, Neil, organises and arranges the publication of this free church and community magazine. It is funded through local advertising from businesses, organisations, and events. The magazine contains a Moving Church message written by a member of our congregation, along with articles of community interest. It also provides an opportunity to share notices of forthcoming church events. The church currently arranges the distribution of 3,000 copies, using volunteers from the congregation.

### Christmas Tree Festival

Now in its tenth year, the Christmas Tree Festival is another opportunity to engage with local organisations and businesses. We display over twenty decorated wreaths and Christmas trees at the start of the Advent season as part of our Festival of Light, which can be enjoyed each evening. The event also links with our Annual Christmas Fair, an effective and much-loved fundraising occasion.



# Finances

St Mark's continues to manage its finances with care, transparency, and a focus on sustainability. Like many churches, we have faced financial challenges following the Covid pandemic, largely due to increasing costs that have outpaced income. However, the PCC is actively addressing this by regularly reviewing our financial strategy to ensure long-term stability and to enable us to maintain our mission and ministry effectively.

We are committed to reinstating our full Parish Share and away giving to charitable organisations as soon as it is appropriate to do so. These matters are reviewed regularly by the PCC to ensure we remain both responsible and generous in our stewardship.

We maintain a healthy reserve fund that covers approximately three months of general expenditure, ensuring resilience and security for the future.

Our Church and Church Hall Repair Funds are in a very strong position, enabling us to move ahead with the work identified in our latest Quinquennial Reports. We are blessed with a highly skilled and experienced general works group, whose practical expertise continues to save the church significant costs in maintenance, repair, and development projects.

A recent highlight has been the completion of a new church lighting system, costing approximately £84,000, which was fully funded through donations and dedicated fundraising efforts – a wonderful example of our congregation's generosity and commitment to improvement.

Looking ahead, we aim to further strengthen our running finances by encouraging growth in planned giving and exploring new and creative ways to increase income and manage expenditure effectively. Our financial priorities remain clear: to meet our Parish Share in full, continue our charitable giving, and ensure our finances remain balanced and sustainable.

# Summary

Thank you for your interest in St Mark's Church, Biggin Hill – a vibrant and welcoming church family rooted in prayer, love, and service. We are a warm and inclusive congregation from many backgrounds, united by a shared desire to follow Christ and make Him known in our community. Our church family holds a breadth of perspectives, and we recognise that living out our faith in today's society can sometimes be challenging. We would value a priest in charge who can lead us forward with an inclusive and understanding approach, appreciating and valuing those within our community who hold more traditional views of family life and faith. At the heart of our life together is a strong sense of belonging, care, and fellowship – we support one another through worship, home groups, prayer, and pastoral care, and we extend that same welcome to all who cross our threshold.

We are looking for a prayerful, collaborative, and biblically grounded priest in charge who can inspire and equip us for the next stage of our journey. Our vision is to grow – especially by welcoming more young families – and to deepen our connections with local schools and community groups. We hope you will share our passion for inclusive worship, creative outreach, and practical discipleship. With your leadership, we would like to build on our strengths: lively Sunday and midweek services, an active ministry and lay leadership team, and a flourishing programme of community engagement, from our popular baby & toddler group to our much-loved Christmas Tree Festival.

St Mark's offers you a faithful, capable, and enthusiastic congregation eager to work alongside you. You will find a beautiful and well-equipped church, a supportive PCC and ministry team, and a community that values both tradition and innovation. Our story – “The Moving Church” – is one of perseverance, vision, and answered prayer. Now, as we look to the future, we believe God is calling someone to move forward with us once again. Could that person be you?



# How to apply

If you believe God may be calling you to join us in sharing His love with the community of Biggin Hill, and to play your unique part in building the Kingdom of God as Priest-in-Charge of St Mark's, we would love to hear from you. Application details are available on the Diocese of Rochester website at [www.rochester.anglican.org](http://www.rochester.anglican.org).

If you would like an informal conversation about this vacancy, please contact Fiona Porter (EA to the Archdeacon of Bromley & Bexley) at [fiona.porter@rochester.anglican.org](mailto:fiona.porter@rochester.anglican.org)



# The History of The Moving Church

The Moving Church is just that – the church that moved. The story of how All Saints Church, North Peckham, became St Mark's Church, Biggin Hill, is a fascinating tale of determination, endeavour, faith and, of course, answered prayers!

In 1904, when Biggin Hill was just a small village of 200 inhabitants, the tiny temporary church of St Mark's, seating at most 70 people, was dedicated by the Bishop of Dover, who said:

“It is to be regarded only as a preliminary step in a scheme contemplated for supplying the spiritual needs of this district. The present church is a temporary iron structure and whenever the district has sufficiently developed, it is intended to erect a permanent brick and stone building.”

It was to be over half a century before that vision was finally realised.

By 1951, the population had risen to nearly 4,000, and Biggin Hill was known far and wide as the base of those valiant few of the Royal Air Force to whom we will all forever owe so much. The temporary corrugated iron church still nestled behind the trees on the corner of Stock Hill. Despite the efforts of the regular worshippers, it seemed – with post-war difficulties and rapidly rising costs – that the building of a new church was as far off as ever.





Then came a small, dark Cornishman of bounding vitality and unquenchable faith: Vivian Symons. What he thought when he first set eyes on the rather dilapidated little iron church that was to be his first Cure, only he knows. What matters most is that he came – and straightaway had visions of a church worthy of his God, our God.

The Diocese had no plans for building a new church in Biggin Hill in the foreseeable future. The St Mark's Building Fund stood at £2,600, raised after nearly fifty years of effort, and there was little hope of obtaining the considerable sum needed from local sources. Nevertheless, a worthy church there had to be – and if the only way of obtaining one was to dismantle an old church and rebuild it, then so be it.

Few thought it possible; more thought it far too great an undertaking. But eventually, permission was granted and all the formalities completed for taking down the old redundant church of All Saints, North Peckham, London – some 19 miles away.

On 12 August 1952, the Vicar, Rev. Vivian Symons, could be seen driving down the Old Kent Road in an old Morris lorry, given by a London builder, on his way to start dismantling All Saints. From that day, he spent every available hour – sometimes with a small band of voluntary and inexperienced helpers, but often on his own. It was a full-time job, yet in addition there was the work of his district to attend to, as well as his role as Chaplain to the RAF Station.

Day after day, lorry load after lorry load, the work went on. In time, everyone became more proficient at a job that had at first been new and strange to them. Begrimed with the disturbed dust of ages, in his dog collar and overalls, the Reverend Vivian Symons became a familiar figure in the Camberwell district.

The complete dismantling of All Saints took three years and four months. All that was left was a clean, level site. In Biggin Hill, 125,000 bricks – all cleaned and stacked, mostly by the ladies of St Mark's – along with 200 tons of stonework and all the roof timbers, were safely stored on open land behind the Vicarage.

Work then began clearing and levelling the ground, ready for the foundations. Thanks to the loan of a mechanical shovel and a small dump truck, many back-aching hours – and even months – were saved. To have seen the Vicar manoeuvring this mechanical aid with joyous abandon, often by night in the light of its headlamps, was an experience not without its perils, particularly for the sundry drivers of the truck who, in those early days of learning, were as likely to have a load of earth released into their lap as into the truck!



By 1958, all was set to start the actual building. Plans had been prepared and passed, and the Building Fund had risen to £5,330 through the generosity of many people. How long it would have taken to build the church by voluntary labour is a matter of conjecture, but Durtrells Ltd, a local building firm of great repute, offered to build it on a no-profit basis. Such generosity could only be accepted, and it was clearly God's will that the Parish Church of Biggin Hill should not be delayed.

Whilst the building work was going on, all the church organisations were busy providing the furnishings and furniture. The ladies and young girls were sewing, embroidering, and making the hassocks and pew covers, while the furniture was made from £300 worth of English oak given by anonymous donors. The old stone was recarved. The Vicar also turned his hand to engraving the windows — using a dentist's drill — and to transforming gifts of old gold and silver into the magnificent Altar Cross, Chalice, Alms Dish, and Paten.

When the old corbel stones were re-set in the brickwork, the Vicar borrowed (free of charge) a 50-ft jib crane and lifted the roof trusses and purlins into position within three days. After replacing over two and a half miles of roof boarding, the roof was tiled and the fabric of the church completed.

On Saturday, 25th April 1959 (St Mark's Day), the bells rang out for the first time for the Consecration of the Church by the Lord Bishop of Rochester.

**Lynn Hussey**

**Member of the PCC and Standing Committee**



# Appendix 2

## OUR VISION

As a family of faith across the areas of Medway, north and west Kent, and the London Boroughs of Bromley and Bexley we understand that we are:

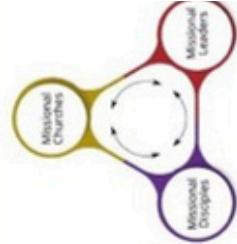
**Seeking first the Kingdom of God, and are called together by God to change, serve and grow with compassion, courage, and creativity.**



### OUR KEY OBJECTIVES

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

- Growing a safe and healthy culture for all
- Growing younger and more diverse
- Growing spiritually and numerically
- Impacting their communities
- Releasing financial resources for mission
- Planting and growing new missional churches



### MAKING IT HAPPEN

Four workstreams help focus our work to grow **God's Kingdom** and ensure a **flourishing and well-resourced parish structure**.

All are seen through the lens of **growing safe and healthy cultures**, because if we are truly seeking God's Kingdom, then we must reflect its values of righteousness, peace, wholeness, and fullness of life for all.



Dear God,

Fill us with courage and vision to carry your light into new places, moving people where they are, and sharing the life-changing truth of your Gospel.

Bless these communities with strong and Spirit-filled leaders, joyful discipline and hearts abuzz with love for you.

May our churches and communities become vibrant and healthy expressions of your Kingdom—places where your Word is proclaimed, lives are transformed, and communities are renewed.

Guide us, Lord, and remind us always that you are with us, empowering our own 'In Jesus' name, we pray.

Amen.

### BE PART OF IT

The vision stands on the shoulders of a generation of previous post-war pilgrims of the Diocese of Rochester who, also at a great moment of societal change, upheld and challenged, had a steadfast belief that through their combined endeavour, generosity, and faith, they could grow the Church and God's kingdom.

**This is what we are being called to - let's make it happen!**

