

DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

ST MARK'S CHURCH, BROMLEY

PARISH PROFILE

ARCHDEACON'S WELCOME

Thank you for taking the time to prayerful consider whether God might be calling you to be the next Vicar of St Mark's, Bromley. This is an exciting time in the life of Rochester Diocese 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 can come to know the love of Christ. Our diocesan strategy prioritises and supports parish ministry and clergy well-being.

The diverse and friendly congregation at St Mark's are looking forward to welcoming a new Vicar who will lead them in mission and ministry. St Mark's has a strong choral tradition and excellent links with St Mark's primary school, these strengths offer potential for growth.

Located just off the High Street, opposite Bromley South train station, St Mark's has a visible presence in the community. They are part of the supportive and friendly Bromley Deanery in the London Borough of Bromley.

There is easy access to central London, Rochester and the Kent countryside and Bromley town centre has a good range of shops, restaurants and cafes. It is my hope that the next Vicar will value and build on the existing good work, seek new opportunities to share God's love with the community, and nurture and develop the gifts of the existing congregation.

"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 Bromley."

- Ven Archdeacon Allie Kerr





WHO WE ARE AT ST. MARKS CHURCH

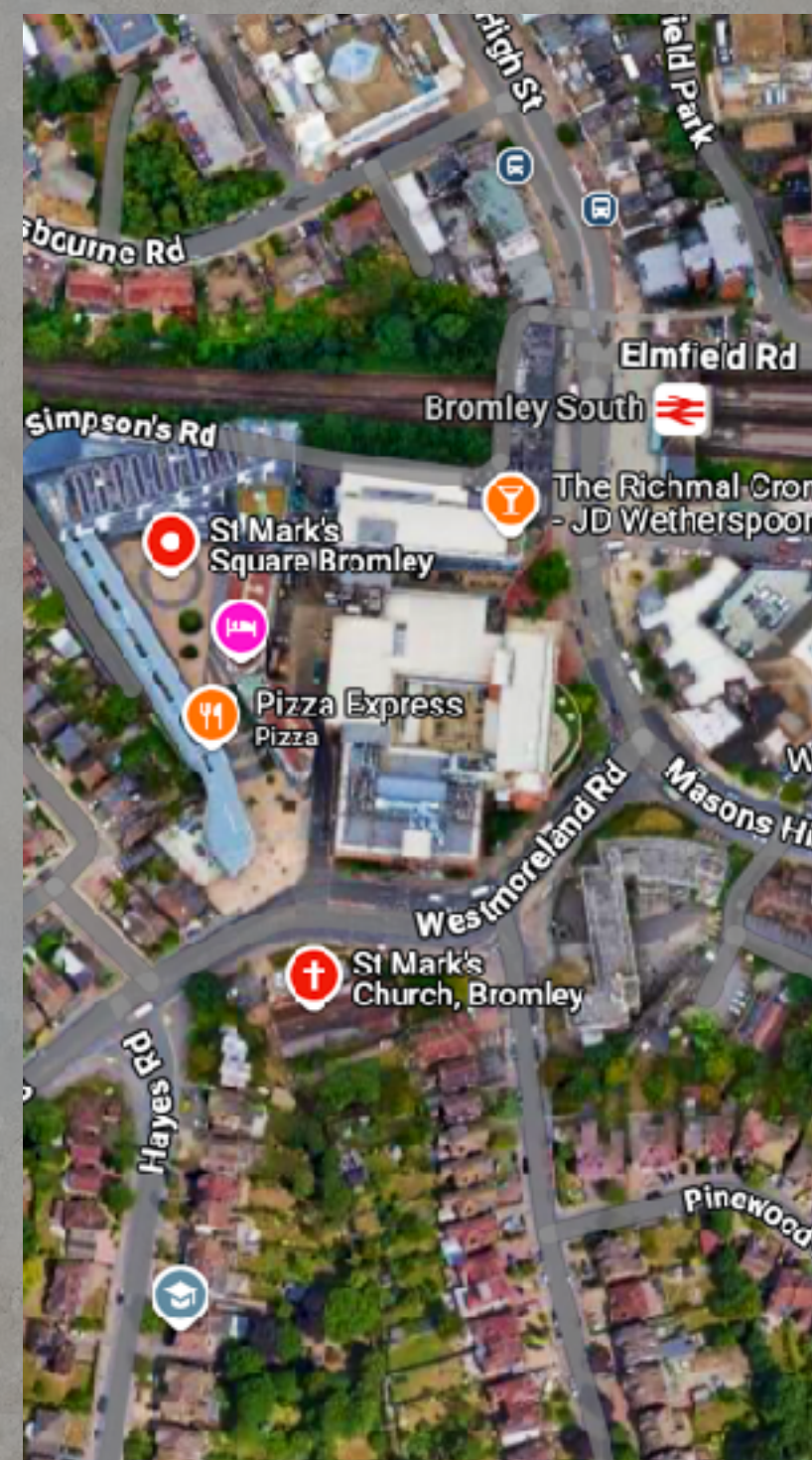
St. Mark's Church, in the south of Bromley, is a vibrant and inclusive Christian community with a rich history and an enduring commitment to faith. Situated in the heart of Bromley's southern neighbourhood, just 20 minutes from central London by train, our church is part of a thriving area renowned for its excellent transport links, outstanding schools, and a bustling high street. This prime location offers the perfect balance of suburban charm and urban convenience, making St. Mark's a spiritual home for a diverse, welcoming and inclusive community which particularly values its rich worship and choral tradition.

As part of the Church of England and the wider Anglican Church, St. Mark's embraces the diversity and richness of our surrounding community. We welcome all into a congregation grounded in the love and teachings of Jesus Christ. Guided by Christ's example, we strive to be a beacon of love, peace, and inclusion, extending our faith and service to our neighbours and beyond.

Our journey began in the 1880s, when Bromley's growing population necessitated a new place of worship. St. Mark's started humbly as an iron church in 1884, built on land near Masons Hill generously provided by Eley Soames. Recognising the need for a permanent structure, Thomas Dewey and Eley Soames secured a new site at the foot of Westmoreland Road in 1896, commissioning renowned architect Evelyn Hellicar to design the church. On 22 October 1898, the completed church was consecrated by the Bishop of Dover, and its iconic tower followed in 1903.

The resilience of St. Mark's community was tested during World War II when bombing raids in April 1941 devastated much of the interior, leaving only the tower intact. Undeterred, the congregation came together to rebuild, preserving the original foundations and salvaging what they could. In July 1953, the Bishop of Rochester reconsecrated the restored church, a symbol of unity, strength, and hope. Today, St. Mark's remains a beacon of faith and community, rooted in its strong liturgical and choral traditions.

We invite you to lead us on this journey of faith, where worship and service to God remain central to our mission. This profile offers a comprehensive view of St. Mark's mission, history, and the opportunities that lie ahead. If our vision resonates with your calling, we warmly welcome you to St. Mark's to continue this journey together, inspired by our shared commitment to faith and service.





WHO WE ARE SEEKING?

We are seeking a prayerful and inspiring leader who will guide us in growing deeper in faith and reaching out with God's love. Rooted in scripture and led by the Holy Spirit, you will inspire us in faith, helping us develop a mission plan that reflects God's call to serve our community and share the Gospel in meaningful ways.

With a heart for people and an understanding of the world beyond the church, you will bring a broad perspective, offering kindness, empathy, and wisdom as you walk alongside others in life's joys and challenges. You will naturally connect with people, valuing each individual and providing pastoral care, comfort, and encouragement as we journey together in faith.

Honouring the rich traditions of St. Mark's, you will also bring fresh ideas and creativity, making worship come alive in new ways. Through dynamic preaching and teaching, you will help us encounter God in our everyday lives. With a deep appreciation for music and our choral tradition, you will support St. Mark's Choir and artistic initiatives, recognising how they enrich our shared faith and bring us closer to God.

As a leader, you will encourage and empower others, recognising the unique gifts God has given each person. You will nurture a culture where people feel inspired to serve, knowing that every role—big or small—plays a part in building God's Kingdom.

We are looking for someone who embraces diversity and makes everyone feel truly welcome, no matter their background or circumstances. With a compassionate heart, you will handle challenges with fairness and wisdom, upholding our safeguarding responsibilities and ensuring that St. Mark's remains a place of safety, belonging, and hope.

Your vision for ministry will extend to all, recognising that God's family includes people from all walks of life. At the heart of your leadership will be friendship, fellowship, and a deep sense of hospitality—making St. Mark's a place where newcomers feel at home and long-time members stay connected and encouraged in their faith.

Collaboration will be key, working alongside office holders, PCC representatives, lay ministers, and the whole congregation as we seek God's will together. You will also continue our valued partnership with St. Mark's CE Primary School, strengthening the bond between church and school to bless our community.

If you feel called to this vision, we would love to welcome you to St. Mark's.





WORSHIP AT ST. MARKS CHURCH

At St. Mark's Church, we are committed to fostering spiritual growth and active participation among our congregation. We encourage involvement in various aspects of worship, including our choir and ministry teams, comprising communion assistants, servers, and stewards.

Weekly Services:

10:00am Sunday Eucharist

08:00am Wednesday Eucharist

Monthly Services

08:00am Eucharist (BCP) First Sunday of every month

18:30pm Evensong Last Sunday of every month (except January & August)

Our Eucharist features a rotating selection of service settings throughout the year. The choir enriches the service by singing communion hymns or psalms, followed by an anthem and organ voluntary at the end of each Sunday service. Seasonal services, such as the commemorative service at the War Memorial in November, further enhance our worship calendar.

Supporting our worship is a dedicated team of servers who prepare the altar, arrange the elements, and serve at all main services, including Evensong once a month and all festival services. Additionally, a small group of volunteers takes care of the church linens.

Our licensed communion assistants play an essential role in distributing the elements at each Eucharist service. Some are also trained and licensed to administer communion to housebound parishioners, ensuring that all members of our community can participate in this sacred rite.

Through these collective efforts, St. Mark's aims to create a worship environment that is inclusive, participatory, and spiritually enriching for all.



"Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth."
– Psalm 96:1



OUR CHORAL TRADITION

Music is a cherished and vital part of the ministry at St. Mark's, enriching our worship and drawing us closer to God. With a strong choral tradition, our music deepens the spiritual life of our community and welcomes all who enter our doors.

Our Director of Music leads a dedicated group of 15–20 singers, who come together on Thursdays for choral practice and Sunday mornings for Eucharist, as well as for monthly services and Choral Evensongs. The choir's musical offerings go beyond our regular services, adding depth and beauty to key moments in the liturgical year, such as Palm Sunday and the annual Nine Lessons and Carols service, which fills the church with both members and visitors, creating a truly special atmosphere of worship.

We are blessed with a choir that spans generations, with choristers from their teens and twenties to experienced singers and choral scholars, all contributing to the vibrant musical life of St. Mark's. This diversity brings richness to our worship, and we are eager to welcome new junior members to sustain and grow this tradition for years to come. This is an exciting area for development, and we look forward to nurturing new voices to continue this legacy.

Beyond St. Mark's, our choir has built a respected reputation, having performed in some of the nation's finest cathedrals. In 2018, they completed a four-day residency at Salisbury Cathedral, and they have sung Choral Evensong at St. Paul's and Peterborough Cathedrals. Their invitation to return to St. Paul's Cathedral is a testament to their musical excellence and dedication. As the choir evolves, we remain committed to supporting our choristers and Director of Music, ensuring that this ministry continues to flourish.

The choir's role extends beyond music—they serve in many areas of church life, from PCC members to school volunteers, embodying the spirit of service and worship that is at the heart of St. Mark's.

We are also blessed with a magnificent three-manual organ, which elevates our worship by accompanying hymns and supporting the choir. Alongside this, our grand piano and Clavinova further enrich our musical offerings, providing versatility and inspiration in our services and special events.





A CHURCH AT THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY

At St. Mark's, our faith calls us to open our doors and our hearts. Through worship, friendship, and shared experiences, we welcome all into a place where God's love is lived out in community.

Our Friendship Group brings people together in companionship and support. Music fills our sacred space, from choral scholars to community singers who practice and perform in the church. The church hall is home to a weekly yoga group, offering a peaceful place for physical and mental wellbeing.

Every Bring & Share Meal in the church hall is a chance to gather, share food, and deepen our friendships. These meals reflect the spirit of Christ's hospitality, where all are welcome at the table. The church also hosts social gatherings, community events, and special services, creating a space where faith and everyday life meet. But what we value even more is the centrality of the Eucharist and the way we approach liturgy with consistency, care, and reverence. This focus makes St Mark's different from any other church in Bromley, offering something truly sacred and grounding. We previously had a Mom and Toddler Group which we also wish to recommence as soon as we are able.

Everything we do at St. Mark's—from gathering around the table to singing together in worship—is an opportunity to interact with the community and share God's love. Whether you join us for prayer, music, fellowship, or a simple cup of tea, we hope you will experience the warmth of Christ's welcome.

Through worship, shared meals, music, and community, we live out God's love. St. Mark's is not just a place of worship—it is a home for all who seek friendship, faith, and belonging.





A LIVING PARTNERSHIP WITH ST MARK'S PRIMARY

At St. Mark's, our relationship with St. Mark's Church of England Primary School is not just one of name but of active faith, service, and shared mission. The church and school walk closely together, offering children and their families a foundation of Christian values, worship, and community engagement. This partnership is a blessing, and we believe there is great potential for it to grow even further.

The school regularly uses the church as a sacred space, where children experience worship beyond the classroom. Choral services, Nativity plays, and end-of-term celebrations bring the school community into the heart of our church, allowing young voices to sing God's praises and experience the beauty of shared worship. Clergy and church leaders are welcomed into the school, offering pastoral support and helping to embed Christian teaching in daily life.

We are praying for a leader who will nurture, strengthen, and expand these ties, seeing them as a central part of our mission and outreach. There is room for growth, particularly in encouraging regular church attendance among school families, deepening their sense of belonging within our congregation. Through thoughtful stewardship and a clear mission plan, we hope to inspire the next generation to engage with the church not just on special occasions but as an integral part of their lives.

The role of the next leader will be to build on this strong foundation, ensuring that the partnership with St. Mark's School flourishes. By offering pastoral care to staff and pupils, engaging families, and creating more opportunities for joint worship and service, we can develop a truly interwoven community of faith.

We believe that St. Mark's Church should feel like home for every child and family connected to our school. Through prayerful leadership, mission-focused outreach, and a commitment to growth, we seek to draw more people into the life of the church, strengthening faith in the school community and beyond.



"The headteacher's commitment to ensuring the school is a church school "in practice, not just in name" is inspiring, and it's clear that the school sees St Mark's as their church."

- Curate Lizzie Longhurst, 2024.



ST MARK'S
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL



ST MARKS PRIMARY SCHOOL

"We would dearly like the new Vicar to be involved as much as possible in the life of the school as we believe a strong link would be mutually beneficial for Church and School.

Leading acts of worship on a rota-basis, occasionally helping in RE lessons, being present for school acts of worship in the Church – these are all practical opportunities.

However, one role I would like to see developed is the opportunity for the Vicar to be - informally - the School Chaplain."

- Chris Hollands, Headteacher

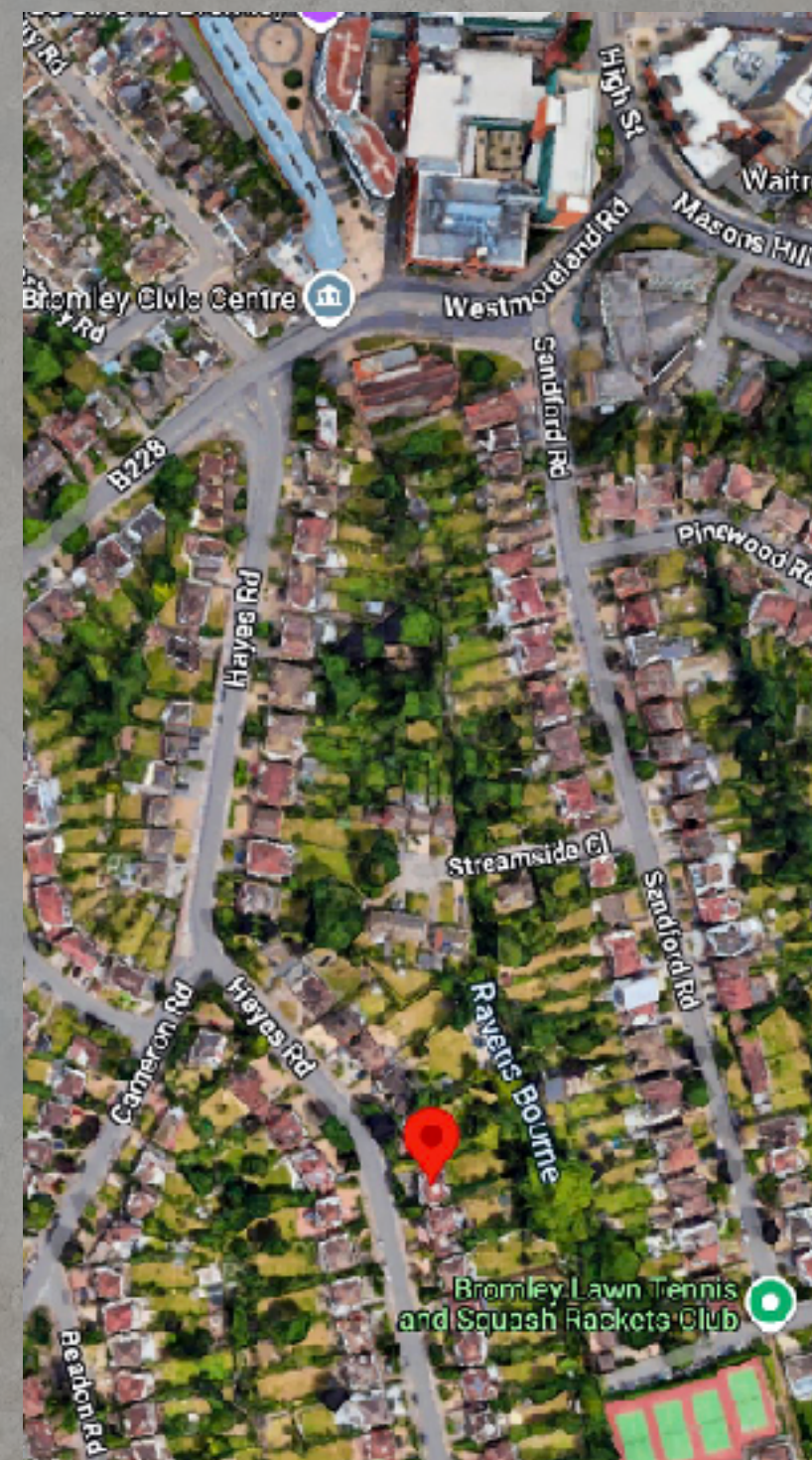


VICARAGE & PROPERTY PORTFOLIO

The Vicarage is located on Hayes Road just a five-minute walk from St. Mark's. This early 20th-century home provides generous living space, featuring three reception rooms, a dining room, kitchen, scullery, and toilet on the ground floor, as well as five bedrooms, a bathroom, and an additional toilet upstairs. The property includes a spacious garden with a patio, offering a peaceful setting for both relaxation and parish gatherings.

St. Mark's parish also owns a three-bedroom house on Matfield Close in the southern part of the parish. This property, managed by an independent estate agent, is available for rental when not needed for a curate, providing a valuable source of income for the church.

On the south side of the church itself, there is a serene Garden of Remembrance for the laying of ashes, and adjacent to it, a Prayer Garden filled with plants of biblical significance. A leaflet available in the church details each plant's scriptural connection, offering visitors a meaningful experience rooted in faith and tradition.



SAFEGUARDING

At St. Mark's, we are unwavering in our commitment to a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment for all.

Our safeguarding practices are robust: we operate at Parish Dashboard Level 3, with regular monitoring by our Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) and consistent updates to the PCC. We implement a thorough Safer Recruitment process, ensuring that every individual in a position of responsibility is carefully selected, trained, and supported according to our Safer Recruitment Policy.

Parish Disclosure remains fully up-to-date, with ongoing reviews by both the PSO and the Parish Disclosure Officer. The PCC actively oversees all church activities, ensuring that we adhere to the highest standards of safety and inclusivity as outlined in the Church of England's Safeguarding Policy, *Promoting a Safer Environment and Culture*.

We believe safeguarding is the responsibility of our entire church community, dedicated to the care and protection of children, young adults, and vulnerable adults, fostering an environment where everyone can thrive safely.



FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

St. Mark's Church faces both financial challenges and opportunities as it seeks sustainability. For several years, the church has operated at a financial deficit, which is unsustainable without an increase in donation income, as most expenses from unrestricted funds are non-discretionary. While St. Mark's has significant capital funds, the PCC intends these to support long-term projects, such as energy efficient initiatives and ongoing maintenance. However, to advance these projects, finding volunteers with expertise, time, and energy to manage proposal, approval, and delivery processes is essential.

The Parish Offer system presents an additional challenge, but the PCC is considering a stewardship campaign and other ways to increase our income and achieve a balanced budget in the future. Currently the church's primary donation income comes via Standing Orders and Gift Aid, supplemented by online donations, card payments, and service collections. St. Mark's also generates revenue from renting out facilities and a church-owned house, though some costs inevitably arise too from this trading activity.

St. Mark's adheres to a Finance Policy aligning with its charitable obligations, with PCC oversight and independent account examination. Cash accounting is used, with a dual-signature system for transactions, while capital funds are placed in interest-bearing accounts. Though ongoing deficits have been observed, substantial bequests in recent years have bolstered capital reserves. These funds, reserved for strategic projects, remain unspent as of 2023, with expenditure contingent on PCC decisions.

Net surplus (deficit) £	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Church + Worship	(28,769)	(61,626)	(22,004)	(9,403)	(26,608)
Trading	27,983	4,509	15,898	9,125	3,339
Projects + Initiatives	(3,481)	(4,802)	4,021	(2,211)	(925)
Total	(4,267)	(61,919)	(2,085)	(2,489)	(24,194)



SWOT

- "St. Mark's PCC is looking at longer term strategy & plans which will be informed by the SWOT analysis below."

STRENGTHS

1. Strong sense of community and welcoming atmosphere that values inclusivity and diversity.
2. Established partnerships with St. Mark's CofE School and other community organisations.
3. Committed lay ministry team and pastoral support for parishioners, particularly for those who are ill or housebound.
4. Active role of St. Mark's Choir and artistic initiatives enriching worship and community life.
5. History of resilience and community spirit, with deep roots in Bromley South.

OPPORTUNITIES

1. Potential for growth through increased engagement with residents and visitors in St. Mark's Square and the broader parish.
2. Broadened use of the church as a venue for general meetings, expanding its role as a community hub.
3. Developing stronger links with local schools, child care facilities, funeral directors, and the Bromley Youth Music Trust.
4. Expanding communication channels, such as social media, banners, and notice boards, to increase community awareness of St. Mark's.
5. Encouraging more lay ministry roles, discipleship, and volunteer involvement to meet community needs and support church functions.

WEAKNESSES

1. Aging congregation with limited appeal to younger audiences, leading to challenges in long-term growth.
2. Limited visibility and awareness of church activities in the wider community.
3. Insufficient office facilities impacting administrative efficiency and community outreach.
4. Reliance on traditional worship styles may not appeal broadly to a more diverse audience.
5. Strain on volunteer resources, with many congregation members having external commitments that limit engagement.

THREATS

1. Financial pressure due to rising costs, impacting the sustainability of church operations and community programs.
2. Competition for parishioners and community attention with other local organisations and venues.
3. Difficulty in attracting and retaining younger families and individuals due to current worship styles and limited youth-focused programs.
4. Risk of volunteer burnout, given the current demands on congregation members and the need for more active engagement.
5. Challenges in fostering consistent attendance and retention, potentially limiting long-term growth and stability.

HOW TO APPLY

If you believe God might be calling you to join us in sharing the love of God with the community of St Mark's, Bromley and to play your unique part in building the Kingdom of Christ as Vicar of St Mark's we'd love to hear from you. Application details are available on the Diocese of Rochester website at www.rochester.anglican.org

If you'd like an informal conversation about this vacancy please contact Fiona Porter (EA to the Archdeacon of Bromley & Bexley) on fiona.porter@rochester.anglican.org

PARISH PROFILE