

St Nicholas Church
Chislehurst
Parish Profile



Our vision:
*"Building a family that knows and
reflects the love of Christ"*



St Nicholas Church is open from dawn to dusk.

THE PARISH PROFILE : ST NICHOLAS CHURCH, CHISLEHURST

Geographical Location:

The parish is one of three in Chislehurst, situated in the North West corner of Kent in the London Borough of Bromley, in the Diocese of Rochester, on the border with the Diocese of Southwark. It is approximately 12 miles from central London.

The people of Chislehurst:

The population of Chislehurst is nearly 15,000 living in 6,000 households with an average age of 42. Over half the population is married and over 90% are white. 83% own their own home, 1/2% live in council rented accommodation. Two-thirds of adults of between 16 and 74 are employed. 1 in 6 in this age range is retired. Over 75% of the population is in social class ABC1.

The people of the Parish of St Nicholas, Chislehurst:

The population of the parish is estimated to be 4,000 living in 1,500 houses and in retirement accommodation.

The Parish Setting:

Whilst Chislehurst as a whole is located in a suburban area, the Parish retains a rural aspect with Commons, farms, National Trust land and woodland, and a large nature reserve. There are 4 retirement homes, 6 schools, including Chislehurst C of E Primary (St. Nicholas) school [the incumbent is an ex-officio governor], two state and one independent secondary, a school for children with special needs and an Islamic school. The total school population is in the region of 4,000.

Buildings:

The listed Grade II* **Church** in parts dates to Saxon times and was largely rebuilt in the 15th century and extended in the 19th. Quinquennial recommendations are carried out in a timely manner and the large churchyard is regularly maintained. A faculty has recently been obtained to extend the Memorial Garden. We are at present seeking a faculty to improve access to the Church.

The **Church Hall** which is across the road from the Church was largely rebuilt in 1976, following a fire, with an expected life of 15 to 20 years. There was an extension in 1986. The hall is used for All Age Worship, Sunday School and a number of church and community events throughout the week. The hall is available for hire and is well used by both the community and the congregation. Concept plans for a new hall have been drawn up, made widely available to the congregation and broadly accepted. The development is presently on hold until we have completed the need for improved disabled access at the church, progress on which is proceeding.



Ecclesiastical tradition:

St Nicholas is recognized as the original church of the area with a long history reflecting classic Anglicanism and is a Eucharistic church. During the past 10 years, the pattern of worship offered has broadened significantly whilst retaining our choral and BCP traditional services. The principal innovations have been the monthly All Age Worship in the church hall targeted at families with young children and the monthly family service in church.

Children are prepared for admission to receive communion from age 7. All types of worship currently in use are respected and valued by different sections of the congregation.

All Age Worship :

On the first Sunday we have a non-Eucharist All Age Worship service in the hall with ever increasing numbers attending. We have considerable involvement and input from the families in planning and leadership of the service. Our numbers exceed 200 at present and this may need to become a bi-monthly service.



Pattern of Sunday Worship:

There are four services held each Sunday.

1st Sunday

- 8:00am BCP Holy Communion
- 9:30am Parish Eucharist, and All Age Worship
(held in the Church Hall)
- 11:15am BCP Matins & Holy Communion
- 3:00pm Baptism Service
- 6:00pm BCP (Choral) Evensong.

2nd Sunday

- 8:00am BCP Holy Communion
- 9:30am Parish Eucharist
- 11:15am BCP Matins
- 6:00pm Evening Prayer.

3rd Sunday

- 8:00am BCP Holy Communion
- 9:30am Family Eucharist
- 11:15am BCP (Choral) Matins
- 3:00pm Baptism Service
- 6:00pm Service of Healing & Holy Communion.

4th & 5th Sunday

- 8:00am BCP Holy Communion
- 9:30am Parish Eucharist
- 11:15am BCP Matins
- 6:00pm Evening Prayer.

Sunday School & Crèche:

Each Sunday at 9:30am in the Church Hall
(except first Sunday).

Children, adults and teachers join the main service in church
for communion.

There are bi-monthly evening services run with Churches
Together in Chislehurst (see below).

The Belfry:

The bells, a rather heavy-going ring of eight, are rung from the
ground floor. However, in spite of a general dearth of
bellringers, St Nicholas has a active team of at least 17
members. Sunday Service ringing is a high priority and it is
seldom that the full eight bells are not rung. Eight of the
ringers are young people from local schools.



Music:

The robed choir is of a high quality, led by a professional organist and choirmaster. The family service has a vibrant informal singing group. Hymn books used are BBC Songs of Praise and New English Hymnal.



Weekday services:

Monday Mothers' Union: Start the week with Prayer
Holy Communion on 3rd Monday

Tuesday and Thursday Morning Prayer 9am.

Wednesday Prayer in Scadbury Chapel 9am

Wednesday 10:00am BCP Holy Communion.

Major festivals are celebrated with a sung Eucharist in the evening. There are also regular services at some of our retirement homes. There are weekly school assemblies and services to which the neighbouring Anglican churches contribute. There are also regular school Holy Communion services in church throughout the year.

Occasional Offices:

Baptisms: 52 children 3 adults

Weddings: 16

Funerals: 12 services in church and 12 services at the crematorium led by St. Nicholas clergy. (2009 figures)

Attendance on a normal Sunday:

Adults and children (excluding figures for baptisms) as an average for 2009:

The number of worshippers for the 8:00am service is approximately 20 with occasional steep increases. The number at the 9.30 am service can vary quite considerably due to the differing types of service, however an average, including the congregation and choir is around 180. This number continues to increase. Matins has an average attendance of 5. Additional worshippers attend the evening services and also the services at retirement homes. The AAW service has an attendance of 104 adults and 98 children. About two-thirds of the Church Family are resident in Chislehurst but only 30% actually live in the parish.

Ministry Team:

The Parish has a long tradition of women's ministry and currently has the services of a woman Associate Rector and two retired priests one male and one female; two readers; three pastoral assistants. Also, a part-time Parish Administrator.

Lay involvement: A team of helpers at Sunday School and crèche which has over 180 children on its registers (excluding crèche). There is significant lay involvement across all aspects of our services and church family life.

Groups & Courses:

At present two house groups are being run and more are planned for 2010. We run short courses in Autumn and Spring. We participate in the CTC Lent Course. Alpha Courses are held each year.

Churches together in Chislehurst:

A covenant has been signed between the three Anglican, the two Roman Catholic, the Methodist and the two Free Churches in the area.

Two charity shops are operated. One, which has been established for a number of years, funds projects in the developing world totalling approximately £50,000 per year. The other raises funds to support 'Chislehurst Youth for Christ' and pays for two youth workers and a centre for young people on the Edgebury Estate.

Church groups: Chislehurst Parents' Group (for young parents and their pre-school children); St Nic's Toddler Club (as above for babies and toddlers); MOET men's group in conjunction with Christ Church; CHLOE ladies group; New Crusaders (age 11–14); Mothers' Union; WOW (Women on Wednesday for mothers with school age children); Wednesday Circle: a fortnightly daytime forum with illustrated talks with a broad cultural emphasis given by a wide range of speakers. Average attendance : 30. Church Hall Lunch : Once a month, ladies of the church family provide a lunch for the elderly of the parish. Members of a team of trained Listeners are available on request.

Parish Office: The PCC is keen to develop the Parish Office function. This could include moving much of the office-bound work of the incumbent into the yet-to-be-built, new Church Hall, reserving the rectory for family and a private study.



The Rectory:

A 5 bedroom Georgian style detached house, is located in a small residential close off a very pleasant cul de sac in one of the premier residential areas of Chislehurst. It is in a very good state of repair and is extremely manageable. It is a ten minute walk away from the Church.



Southbeech:

A 4-bedroomed house owned by the parish and usually occupied by a member of clergy, is at present let to tenants.

The Parochial Church Council: The PCC meets regularly. Many of its responsibilities have been delegated to committees, thus enabling the PCC to concentrate on the major decisions required of it. The Rector is an ex officio member of all committees.

Look Out Magazine: is published monthly (except in August) and provides news, information and articles with pictures on activities in the Church.



