



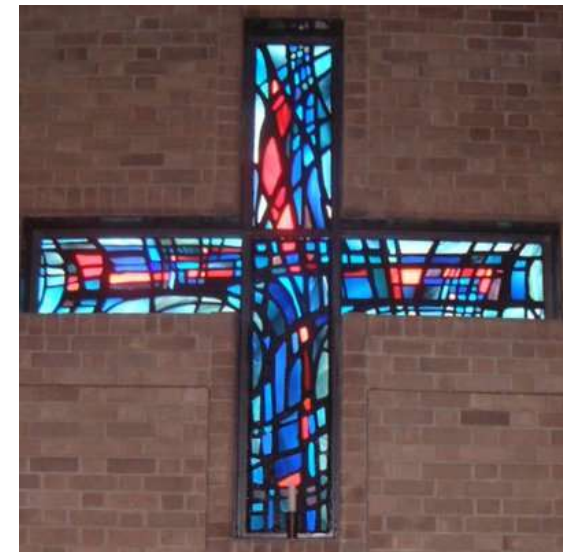
St Christopher's Church

*Discovering the Heart of God
in the Heart of Thornhill
through living the Mission of Jesus*

Vicar

The Parish of Thornhill

In the deanery of Southampton



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WELCOME

Welcome to this parish profile and role description ... and welcome to the Diocese of Winchester!

At the heart of our life here is a desire to be always Living the Mission of Jesus. We are engaged in a strategic process to deliver a mission-shaped Diocese, in which parochial, pastoral and new forms of pioneering and radical ministry all flourish. Infused with God's missionary Spirit we want three character traits to be clearly visible in how we live:

- ✦ Passionate personal spirituality
- ✦ Pioneering faith communities
- ✦ Prophetic global citizens

The Diocese of Winchester is an exciting place to be at the moment. We wait with eager anticipation to see how this process will unfold. We pray that, if God is calling you to join us in his mission in this part of the world, he will make his will abundantly clear to you.

'As the Father sent me so I send you ... Receive the Spirit.'

John 20:21

Read more about [Winchester Mission Action Planning](#) here.



The Rt Revd Debbie Sellin, Bishop of Southampton

SOUTHAMPTON DEANERY

Welcome to Southampton! This is an exciting and growing city and the Deanery of 20 parishes looks forward to welcoming you into our Chapter and Synod. The city itself is growing in population and in diversity. There are many new developments of housing as well as commercial and cultural spaces adding to an already rich offer of theatres, concert halls, parks, and museums. Major employers in the city include the two universities, a large regional teaching hospital as well as the passenger and cargo ports which keep Southampton Water busy with some of the largest ships in the world. Our city also has its challenges, and some of our parishes are amongst the most deprived in the Diocese and in the country. Churches in our Deanery are committed to sharing the love of God in practical action in mission to the people we serve.

We have a lively Deanery Chapter that meets regularly – for 2022 we are experimenting with meeting alternately on Zoom and in person. We are also arranging a Deanery-wide *Living in Love and Faith* course that we hope will draw people from many different churches. The parishes on the East side of the River Itchen are beginning a process of working more closely together to share resources and to draw up a common vision of mission and outreach and we expect the next incumbent of Thornhill to be a part of that project.

Please be in touch if you'd like to find out more!



Sheena Williams
Area Dean

Kathy Hicken & Garry Roberts
Assistant Area Deans

Su Brakewell
Lay Chair



INTRODUCTION

'I am among you as one who serves.' Luke 22:27

Thornhill is an outer city housing estate on the east of Southampton, built mainly in the 1950s and close to the M27, M3, Southampton Airport and the New Forest. Thornhill has a population of nearly 14,000 people of which 91.1% are white British (2011 Census). The parish is clearly defined by main road boundaries and is about three square miles in size. Accommodation is mainly in social housing with three high rise and many low rise housing blocks and some private housing including ex-council houses. There is a permanent, long-established traveller site. Green spaces are plentiful, Hinkler Green Park being a major asset with a football pitch, skateboard park and a Peaceful Garden provided by the Thornhill churches.

St Christopher's Church is placed at the centre of Thornhill and was built at the request of the residents, the hall (then used for worship) in 1960 and church in 1970. The area has three parades of shops, two GP Practices, a dentist, Community Library and other local amenities with a good bus service. Three mainstream Primary Schools, a sizeable Special School and private Pupil Referral Unit are within the parish.

This is an area of deprivation designated in the 2011 census as being in the top 10% most deprived areas of the country. Although Thornhill has a reputation within the city for being both challenging and a difficult place in which to live and work, this stems from a minority of residents. The majority are fantastic people who care about each other and there is a real sense of community. The church is treated with respect but it is a respect that has come from being prepared to be active in the community and always available to people as they turn to us for help and support. **Ministry in Thornhill is about engaging with the community and putting faith into practice.**



OUR VISION

'I am among you as one who serves.' Luke 22:27

Thornhill is a single-church parish with its own Vicar which opens many opportunities for development, alongside the possibility of working with adjoining parishes when appropriate. Our vision is to continue to reach out to those in the community who have little or no knowledge of the Gospel and for whom the Christian faith plays little part in their life, as well as supporting the community and individuals in areas of need.

Much of our Parish Mission Action Plan, developed in 2019, has had to be put on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but we are eager to develop our ideas in the near future. Our plans include:

- Supporting the community by further extending the use of our hall and meeting room for local groups at a low cost to them.
- Caring for our, mainly older, congregation and introducing a Seniors' Lunch Club to involve those not already amongst our members.
- Continuing to provide for the spiritual growth of our members and others, particularly by use of the opportunities the internet has to offer.
- Providing worship and social opportunities for younger people, children and families.
- Encouraging and nurturing lay leadership.
- Providing a wider variety of styles of worship.
- Building on our Eco Church Bronze Award and gaining the Silver Award besides extending our use of Fair Trade products.
- Becoming a dementia-friendly church.
- Development of a system of pastoral support.

St Christopher's is open to new ideas and wishes to use the skills of our new incumbent to expand our vision and further build on our strong Christian presence in the heart of Thornhill.



OUR CHURCH LIFE

'I am among you as one who serves.' Luke 22:27

St Christopher's is an inclusive, welcoming church where we embrace difference and make efforts to include as many people as possible with attention to accessibility such as provision of a hearing loop system in the church and hall, large print words, gluten-free wafers and space for buggies and accessibility scooters in church.

We have an active on-line presence:

Website - <http://www.stchristophers-thornhill.org.uk/>

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/saintchristopherschurchthornhill>

Facebook worship - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/649475702289756>

Twitter - <https://twitter.com/StCsThornhill>

Worship (see also appendix p15)

Worship is mainly eucharistic, based on Common Worship, with all-age worship for Mothering Sunday and Harvest at which we welcome members of the Scouts and Guides. It is planned to implement a non-eucharistic service once a month when possible. Congregational involvement in worship is encouraged. Christmas worship is a feature with up to 500 people attending the two Christmas Eve Christingle services and a midnight Party-goers Carol Service. Pre-covid, worship was also held regularly at a local care home and sheltered accommodation. Monthly on-line worship is held on Facebook.

Discipleship & Spiritual Development

We have three Home Fellowship Groups, some recently being held on-line. Occasional Quiet Days and special services are held such as in Holy Week and worship in the Taizé style to encourage reflection. We have developed our own Christian Basics Course 'Thinking About Faith' which this year was delivered on-line and have a Confirmation service each year.

Mission and Outreach

Mission is important to us and always has an allocation in our budget for selected charities besides benefitting from other fund-raising initiatives, and we have been seeking a Mission Partnership.



St Christopher's is very welcoming and achieves a balance between tradition and modern. Great fellowship and supportive church members.

I like the welcoming and inclusive nature of the people and the worship at St Christopher's.

Members of the congregation



Our outreach involves:

- Family Activity Mornings three times a year (a version of Messy Church)
- Monthly Coffee Mornings
- Special services such as All Souls' Worship and carol singing in the local pubs.
- A Baptism Tree and cards on Baptism Anniversaries.
- Social media presence and St Christopher's News, a quarterly information and news sheet.

Community

Links with the local community are central to St Christopher's:

- The church hall and Freeman Room are available for hire at cost price or free to community groups. St Christopher's Pre School (privately run) use our hall during term time.
- Make Lunch project, hopefully to be resumed
- Supporting the local Food Bank with donations and providing volunteers.
- Links with the Scouts, Guides, Army Cadets and Royal British Legion.
- 'Love Thornhill', the three Thornhill churches working together on projects such as Litter Picks, Community Carol Singing and joint prayer.
- A representative serves on the board of Plus You Limited, the local charitable company.

Schools

St Christopher's had strong links with the local schools:

- Leading assemblies and occasional RE lessons.
- Hosting school visits to church including Carol Services.
- Involvement with school governance and volunteering.
- Holding an annual Easter Schools' Event attracting up to 800 pupils and over 100 accompanying adults.

Social and Fund-raising

Notable are the Summer Fete, Christmas Bazaar and Jumble Sales which are significant community events. We also hold regular social occasions such as a Quiz Evening, Barn Dance, Scrabble Club etc. and host a Christmas Tea Party for the elderly.



I value the friendship and care we show each other and the willingness to try new things.

A member of the congregation

OUR TEAM

'I am among you as one who serves.' Luke 22:27



Steve Gould Churchwarden

I am retired, having worked for the Ford Motor Company for thirty-two years. I also spent ten years in the Territorial Army and another ten years as a Scout Leader. I then attended St Christopher's and was confirmed on my sixtieth birthday in 2015. In the same year I became Churchwarden, this being my sixth year. This, I believe was my calling, a way to serve God. Luke 22.27.

Chas Clements Churchwarden

I have been a Churchwarden at St. Christopher's Church since May 2021, am a retired Electronics Engineer and am involved in the community and parish matters.



Revd Matthew Renshaw Curate

I was ordained deacon in July 2019 and began to serve my curacy at St Christopher's. I was priested in October 2020. Serving the people of Thornhill has been and continues to be a really blessed experience. When the bishop suggested I come here, he said 'they will teach you the gospel' and he was so right. I am a self-supporting minister, currently offering three days to the parish, alongside working as a hospital doctor.

Chris O'Brien LLM

As a retired teacher I have a particular interest in encouraging children in the Christian faith. I have attended St Christopher's since 1980, taking on various roles over the years, and was licensed as a Lay Minister in 2003. I am married with two daughters and two grandsons.



Jane Pelling LLM

I have been an active member of St Christopher's church for over 25 years. In 2012 I undertook LLM training and was licensed in 2015. I have been active in leading and planning worship, fellowship groups, music group and social events at St. Christopher's, although I have had to temporarily step back from my involvement at the moment. I am a qualified Clinical Nurse Specialist, a wife and a mother.

OUR ORGANISATION

'I am among you as one who serves.' Luke 22:27



Governance

Governance is provided by the PCC which meets five times a year, the Standing Committee meeting to set the PCC agenda. Working groups are convened as needed for particular projects. Revd Matthew Renshaw and two lay representatives of the congregation sit on the Deanery Synod.

The PCC is normally chaired by the incumbent and has the responsibility of promoting the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC has maintenance responsibilities for the church fabric and the church grounds which has a car park and the rest is laid to lawn with some mature and some newly-planted trees.

There is a nominated person responsible for our Safeguarding Policy and another for Data Protection issues. We take Safeguarding very seriously and make regular and comprehensive risk assessments for our activities.

Unfortunately we sometimes struggle to find someone with the right skills required for a job and are not always able to fill significant roles.

Attendance

There are 86 people on the Electoral Roll (92 in 2019). The average weekly attendance is currently about 30 adults and 2 children (55 adults, 4 children 2019), many people having not returned to regular attendance since the pandemic. There are particularly increased numbers at Christmas; attendance at the two Christingle services on Christmas Eve 2019 totalling 290 adults and 190 children. During 2019 there were 28 baptisms, 4 weddings, 9 funerals in church and 15 funerals at the crematorium or cemetery.

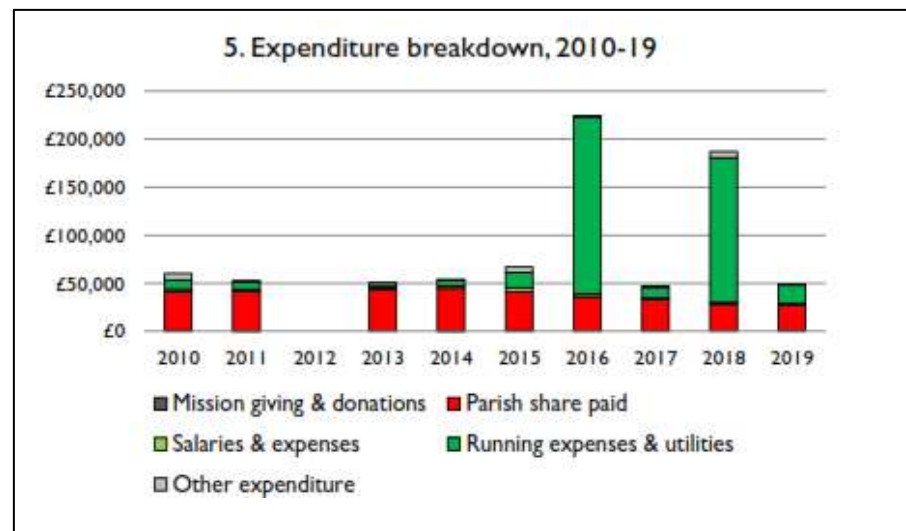
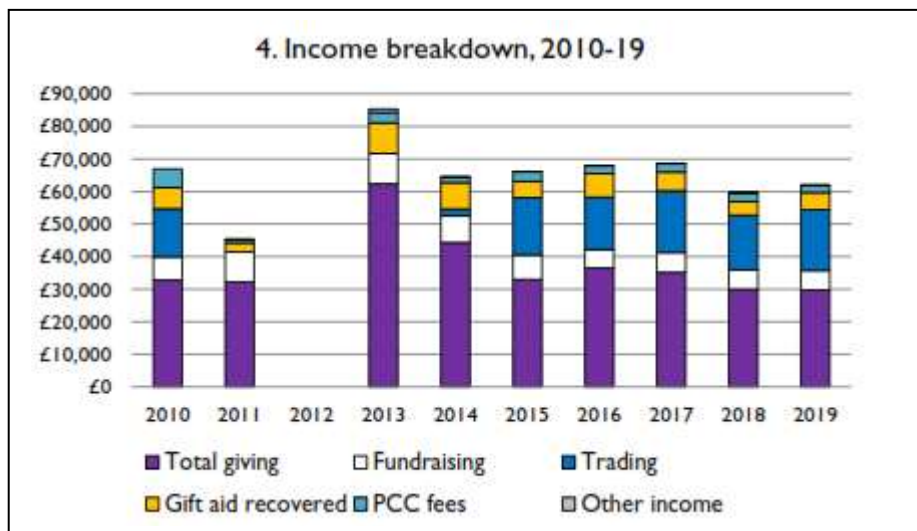
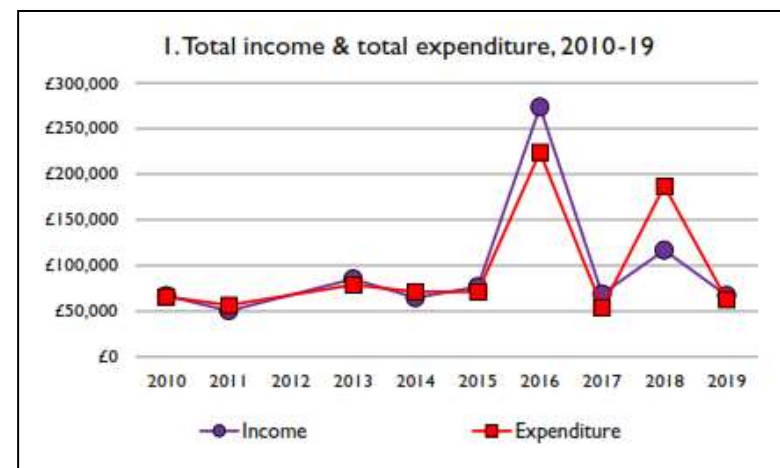
We are fortunate to have a member of the congregation who plays the piano and organ for us and an organist once a month whom we pay. A small music group assembles for all-age worship three times a year.



Finances

The annual budget is set by the PCC. Despite this being an area where incomes are low, our Common Mission Fund contribution, a large proportion of our budget, is paid in full each year. The parish is blessed with 34 regular givers and we engage enthusiastically with fund-raising, stewarding our resources carefully. Church members are generous with extra donations for specific projects as well as with their time and talents. Clergy expenses are reimbursed in full. An amount is kept in a reserve account, mindful that we may have unexpected expenses for maintaining the building etc.

Separate accounts are kept for the hall and bookings, income from letting the hall and Freeman Room covering the running costs of the whole building. St Christopher's Pre School are a main contributor, using our premises for four and a half days each week during term time. They are able to lock the door in the corridor so that they are self-contained when in session. Building alterations made possible by a legacy in 2016 and completed in 2018 have enabled us to make the Freeman Room available for hire by providing a kitchenette and accessible toilet which can be used when Pre School are meeting, however we have not yet fully capitalised on this opportunity to serve the community because of the pandemic. We pay two part-time cleaners for the hall area.



THE HOUSE

The adjacent Vicarage was built in the 1960s and is situated close to local shops, community-run library, a doctor's surgery and bus stops and is within walking distance of three primary schools. It is an attractive brick-built structure set back from the road. It faces south west, has gas central heating and the benefit of solar panels on the roof.

The accommodation consists of the following:

- Ground floor: entrance hall, study, wc and cloakroom, sitting room (with working fireplace), folding door to dining room, and a fitted kitchen.
- First floor: five bedrooms, bathroom, wc.

There is a garden to the front and sides with an enclosed garden at the rear. At the front there is a garage and parking for two cars. There is a rear outbuilding accessible undercover from the kitchen. CCTV has recently been fitted. The house has been well maintained. The windows are double-glazed units and there is a double-glazed porch. At the moment the house is tenanted and the Parish will ensure that the house is handed over to the new incumbent in a good condition.



ROLE DESCRIPTION

'I am among you as one who serves.' Luke 22:27

We are seeking a Vicar for this single-church parish, who is eager to engage with the challenge of ministering in this distinctive community. They should be willing to build on the firm foundations already laid to support the community and nurture discipleship in the family of St Christopher's and amongst all God's people in this area. Church members and office-holders will support our new incumbent in every way that they can, working with them at all times and ensuring they are able to achieve a balance between work and their personal life.

Please read this Role Description alongside the vision and depiction of St Christopher's supplied in this profile.

As our Vicar we are seeking someone who:

Spirituality

- Is a person of prayer who engages with Bible study and theological reflection.
- Is a cheerful and practical Christian who puts Jesus at the centre of their life.

Worship and Preaching

- Is keen to develop a diversity of worship styles whilst being respectful of the traditions of St Christopher's.
- Supports and encourages the ministry of lay people.
- Will get to know and encourage children, young people and families whilst continuing to serve the members of the existing congregation.

Leadership and Collaboration

- Leads in a style mindful of our church text 'I am among you as one who serves' Luke 22:27.
- Will lead the Ministry Team while giving due regard to the skills of each individual within the team and the whole congregation.
- Is able to delegate and listen to the PCC and others.
- Joins in day-to-day tasks, leading by example.
- Is willing to guide a curate-in-training when the opportunity arises.



Discipleship, Learning and Nurture

- Encourages and is a role model in Christian discipleship.
- Will encourage our home fellowship groups and other opportunities for spiritual growth.
- Is prepared to take a leading role in Christian basics and Confirmation courses.

Evangelism and engagement with social justice

- Is prepared to mix with, and enjoys contact with, all sections of the community.
- Has a passion for sharing their faith and enabling others to do the same.
- Is willing to work with schools, both pupils and staff.
- Will take forward our role as an Eco and Fair Trade Church.
- Is committed to mission and engaging with the needs of others both here and abroad.

Pastoral Care

- Is approachable and sensitive to varied pastoral needs and willing to build up a system of pastoral care within our church family.
- Is always ready to visit the housebound, sick and bereaved.

Stewardship and Parish Organisation

- Encourages generosity in the discipleship of church members, in the giving of their time, talents and money.
- Is an effective communicator with the ability to plan, organise and bring projects to fruition.

Ecumenism and Links with other bodies

- Is committed to building on our links with Thornhill Baptist Church and Thornhill Vineyard Church, including through 'Love Thornhill', and encouraging others to do so.
- Will join with others in actively seeking a mission partner for St Christopher's.
- Plays an active part in the Deanery and Diocese.



The role description should always be read in conjunction with the [Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy](#).

HOW TO APPLY

A full application pack, along with Terms & Conditions, is available from the Diocesan website, [here](#).

For an informal conversation about vacancies in the Bournemouth Archdeaconry please contact:

The Rt Revd Debbie Sellin
Bishop of Bournemouth 01962 737343
Bishop.Debbie@winchester.anglican.org

Jane Hammond
Clergy Appointments Assistant 01962 737310
Clergy.appointments@winchester.anglican.org



Appendix

Worship

- Sundays 9.00 a.m. first Sunday of each month '@ Home with St Christopher's' on Facebook, an informal Service of the Word.
10.00 a.m. Parish Communion, Common Worship with hymns and a sermon,
followed by refreshments in the church hall.
- Tuesdays 9.00 a.m. Personal Prayer time in church
10.00 a.m. Communion and Coffee with prayers for Healing, informal worship with an opportunity for the Laying on of Hands
10.45 a.m. - 12 noon Refreshment drop-in, in the Freeman Room.

'I am among you as one who serves.'
Luke 22:27

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