



St Margaret's Chipstead- Parish Background

St. Margaret's church has over the last 9 years gone through a period of significant growth and change. In recent years the church has moved from being a fairly central tradition village church to now being an open evangelical and gently charismatic church which is gathered as well as local. St. Margaret's is the only church in the parish and so the worship is deliberately varied- traditional as well as contemporary. We have an 8am traditional Book of Common Prayer communion service which has around 10-15 regular worshippers. We have a 9am Common Worship service with hymns where clergy robe. This has a regular attendance of between 30 and 40. The largest service is the 10.45 service. This has an adult attendance of around 80 and between 40 and 50 children and young people. It is an informal service with a music group. The 10:45 service is currently our area of growth although we are committed to all 3 services growing.

Our largest area of ministry is currently our children and families work. We have a weekly singing group for pre-school children which is run by a gifted member of the church with support from the Children & Families Worker. We have found this to be a very good and non-threatening introduction to Church. This often leads to families coming to Messy Church which happens around every six weeks on a Saturday afternoon in our church centre called the Orchard. We also have a mid-week baby group for new Mums to get support from which may have found hugely helpful. Our Children and Families Worker also visits the Netherne 'Say and Play' toddler group on a monthly basis to lead and activity there and to have a presence. We have our Junior Church meeting during the service on a Sunday morning along with our teenage Ignite group. Ignite is for younger teenagers (11-14) and an average week would see around 8 members gathering during the service. Our teenage youth group meets on a Sunday lunchtime or evening and sometimes for other activities at different times.

St. Margaret's has around 9 Life Groups (small groups) meeting weekly or fortnightly for study and prayer. This includes a men's group which also has a social emphasis. There is scope for growth and involvement in this area. There is a monthly community drop in called CAMEO (come and meet each other) which tends to attract older people. This meets in Hooley Village Hall and attracts local people as well as church people. We run Alpha on an annual basis as well as other teaching and discipleship courses such as Pilgrim. We host the Marriage course, parenting course and host one night a week for a winter night shelter.

The parish of Chipstead is incredibly diverse and very unusual. It is very big geographically and feels quite rural in places so a car is desirable. However there are more urban aspects being very near Coulsdon and you can be in central London by train within 30 minutes. The parish is made up of four distinct communities. Chipstead is a commuter village whose residents have higher disposable income than the national average. It works very hard to create community with plenty of village events and clubs. Hooley is a much more diverse area from a cultural and socio-economic perspective. It has maintained strong community relationships, in spite of urbanisation in the surrounding areas over the years. It has a social club and hall and is right by the A23. The hamlet of Mugswell is home to a few hundred people and the majority of the area consists of farmlands. It has a mission hall owned by the church with services a few times a year. The fourth community in the parish is Netherne on the Hill, a relatively new housing development built on the site of an old hospital. It has a mix of exclusive and affordable housing and is an area of potential engagement and growth for us as a church.

The mission opportunities in Netherne are huge and the community is largely families. In 2015 we developed a Mission Action Plan for the next 5 years to look at other mission possibilities. This includes some sort of fresh expression in Netherne and we have two members of our congregation who have completed a 'Fresh Expressions Pioneer Ministry' course. We are currently actively exploring possibilities in this area and the Children and Families Ministry certainly has potential for further outreach in this area.

We are very fortunate at St Margaret's to have a good staff team as well as very active lay leaders and volunteers. We have paid administrative support and a paid part time Youth Worker. We also have three Lay Readers, one Southwark Pastoral Auxiliaries (Pastoral Workers) a retired but active Honorary Curate and a Training Curate. There is a very good sense of team work in the church and parish.

The current Rector, Rev Phil Jackson, arrived at St Margaret's in November 2013. After not quite four years he is moving on to a job as School Chaplain so the parish will be entering a vacancy at the end of July. Although this will be a period of change for the church, the PCC, staff team and congregation are in very good heart and are ready for the next chapter at St Margaret's. There will be full support for the staff team and the new Children and Families Leader during the vacancy from the Church Wardens and the Curate and an appointment of a new Rector is hoped to be made just after Easter 2018.