

**ALL SAINTS BIRCHINGTON
WITH ST MILDRED, ACOL
AND ST THOMAS, MINNIS BAY.**



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WELCOME TO THE BENEFICE

Birchington on Sea is a village in Thanet which is in north east Kent. The village is home to the famous Powell - Cotton Museum and Quex Park. It lies on the coast facing the North Sea, east of the Thames estuary, between the seaside resorts of Herne Bay and Margate. There are trains from London Victoria and St Pancras to Birchington. The villages are well served by a bus service Monday to Saturday – but buses only pick up and drop off in Birchington Square on a Sunday and do not serve Acol or Minnis Bay. The road network is good – the A299 (Thanet Way) flows off the M2 towards our lovely village. At the St Nicholas at Wade roundabout a left turn takes the driver off the Thanet Way on the A28 into the village. All Saints Church is visible from here. Once in the Village a right turn immediately before the mini roundabout leads the driver to the hamlet of Acol and a left turn at the mini roundabout leads through Birchington to Minnis Bay, passing St Thomas before reaching the seafront.

Minnis Bay is a family beach and has attractions such as a sailing club, windsurfing, cliff top walks and a crabbing pool. Its three smaller bays are surrounded by chalk cliffs. Approximately eleven thousand people live in Birchington and Minnis Bay.

Acol is one of the smallest communities in Kent with a population of less than four hundred people.

INTRODUCTION and OUR VISION

We are delighted that you have taken an interest to take time to learn about our Parish and the communities that make up the three churches. The PCC has enjoyed the process of gathering together this profile and realising all the work that God is doing in our Parish. We eagerly await our new priest in charge and moving forward together.

At a recent PCC Vision Day preparing for new ministry we identified three priorities:

- to embrace change
- to develop youth ministry within our communities
- to minister to the vulnerable

Therefore, we are looking for someone who will support and lead us and who:

- actively shares leadership and will work with us to secure change
- recognises and affirms us and nurtures our gifts
- works with us to further develop our mission plan
- develops our work with young families
- develops and shares our churches' teaching ministry and developing discipleship
- is a good communicator

Our new Priest in Charge will support and lead us to:

- value our diversity and help us to grow in unity
- develop our appeal to young families
- engage with our communities in mission

We offer:

- A welcoming church family, prayer, friendship and fellowship

- shared commitment to meeting our challenges
- encouragement and financial support to take annual retreats and professional development opportunities
- a modern vicarage with plans for a partial refurbishment
- paid administrative support in a designated parish office
- a newly established ministry team which includes two readers, three retired clergy and other lay ministers
- an active community with excellent transport links to London, Canterbury and other parts of Thanet
- diversity of a busy village centre, a popular seafront and a modern rural community
- fantastic sunsets

We are looking for someone who

In leadership:

- will relish the opportunity to facilitate change
- has strong communication skills and is able to convince people of God's plan for developing our benefice
- can inspire, develop and lead members of the parish in lay ministry and joint action within the benefice
- can enable spiritual and numerical growth

In Worship:

- is comfortable with a range of worship styles
- is keen to engage children, young people and families and encourage them to join in the life of the church
- can work with established traditions whilst developing for worship designed to reach out to our communities

Preaching and Teaching:

- can teach with inspiration and clarity
- will minister to the existing congregation and the wider communities identifying opportunities for spiritual development
- will help us to be courageous in growing the kingdom

In Community:

- will help us engage further with local organisations
- will develop our work and partnerships with local churches, particularly those in the Seamarsh group
- will encourage us to build on and develop further our links with our church school and other local schools

The person we find to fulfil this role will:

- have a deep and mature faith
- be a prayerful and spiritual leader
- be collaborative
- be compassionate and empathetic
- be enthusiastic and resilient and have a sense of humour
- be keen to be visible in the local community
- care about people and God

THE BENEFICE – AN OVERVIEW

All Saints, Birchington is a single parish benefice comprising three churches in different settings. St Mildred's, the smallest of the three, is in Acol. It is very much a country church with traditional harvest festivals and country church celebrations. The church owns the land on which the Acol village hall is built and holds events in the hall.

All Saints in Birchington is an ancient building located on the main road as you go through the village. Many community and parish events are held here and in the church hall (Church House).

The churchyard has three unknown sailors' graves and our most famous past resident, Gabriel Dante Rossetti, is buried there. In the church there is also a beautiful window dedicated to him.

St Thomas is the seaside church at Minnis Bay and is the most modern. Recently changes have been made to include audio visual aids to make the church adaptable. Kearns Hall sits behind the church and is used extensively by the local community and the church.

Church	All Saints	St Mildred	St Thomas
Average Numbers attending on an ordinary Sunday 2018	57 adults 10 children – including Junior Church	16	36
Number attending over Christmas 2018 (Christmas Eve and Day)	618 – including Christingle	57 (Carol Service)	36 (Christmas Morning Prayer service only)
Number attending Easter Sunday 2018	130	22	62
Baptisms 2018	23	2	1
Weddings 2018	8	0	1
Funerals (church + burial/cremation)	3	0	0
Funerals (at crematorium)	8	4	6
Children's services/activity	10 (Junior Church – Sundays)		16 (Messy Church-Thursdays)

The number on the Parish electoral roll is 170

The following is a summary of our Service pattern:

In Red – additions to our Services during the Interregnum

* - Service cancelled during interregnum

Church	1 ST Sunday	2 nd Sunday	3 rd Sunday	4 th Sunday	5 th Sunday	Midweek
All Saints	BCP Family Service Evensong *	BCP Sung Eucharist	BCP Sung Eucharist	BCP Sung Eucharist	 Alternate 5th Sunday Parish Sung	Wednesday BCP
St Thomas	Sung Eucharist	Morning Prayer	Sung Eucharist	Sung Eucharist	Eucharist at St Thomas or at All Saints	
St Mildred	Sung Eucharist	No service	Morning Prayer	No Service		Thursday Said * Eucharist Friday Morning Prayer for service leaders

At special seasons of the year, such as during Lent on Ash Wednesday and in Holy Week, as well as Feast days such as Ascension Day, there are additional services at either All Saints or St Thomas.

As much as possible we try to hold baptisms in a Family/Morning Prayer service.

In 2018, there were approximately 260 Home Communion taken into parishioner's homes/care homes in the village.

Each church has its own local committee which meets regularly and reports to the PCC.

ALL SAINTS CHURCH - the village church

The Parish Church in Birchington stands at the focal point of the village, situated as it is at the junction of the main shopping street in the village and the A28 through road between Margate and Canterbury.



An iconic building of traditional style, it was originally built in the 13th century and has remained largely unchanged since the addition of the bell tower and spire in the 14th century. The latter is the home tower for a vibrant and active tower of bell ringers who practice on Tuesday evenings. They have attracted new members recently and are proactive at ringing quarter peals for notable events, including those such as landmark birthdays and memorials for parishioners.

As with most churches of this vintage, upkeep of the fabric is a constant challenge.

The boiler has recently been replaced. In 2012, architect plans were drawn up for a toilet plus kitchen facilities in the church which have not been realised yet.



The 'main service' at All Saints is a modern sung Eucharist at 10:00am on Sunday mornings.



All Saints also hosts most of the weddings and baptisms in the parish each year, following preparation for those involved.

A well-attended Bereavement service is held each year on a Sunday near to All Saints Day, and feedback from this is very positive.



We also host significant civic services, for example a service for the Birchington Twinning Association to which our French visitors are invited; the annual 'Service of Remembrance' on the Sunday closest to 11th November; and a candle lit Carol service.

The laity play an active part in all aspects of parish life.

The church is open every Saturday morning from 10:00am to 12:00 Noon. Although visitor numbers are small, this provides a welcome and important opportunity to reach out to the local community as well as visitors to the village Refreshments are served after the 10:00am service in Church House.



The churchyard is closed and maintained by the local district council, supplemented by volunteer working parties.

Junior Church is held during the 10:00am service each Sunday in Church House.

ST MILDRED ACOL - the country church

The small village within the parish is blessed with the church of St Mildred. The church was built in 1876 by the architect C.G. Beazley who built many churches within the local area at the time.



St Mildred Church was built to act not only as a place of worship within the village, but also as a school for the local children. The original cost of building the church was less than £800 which was raised by members of the congregation and farmers within the area. The school in the church closed in the First World War but some old features of the school remain.

Two services held each month, a Eucharist and a Morning Prayer. Also celebrated are the festivals throughout the year which always seem popular within the parish as St Mildred is the 'rural' church in the Parish. Everybody is known on first name terms

and within one visit all are charmed by this lovely church.



ST THOMAS MINNIS BAY - the seaside church



Following the gift of land in 1924 by Ida Kearns, in memory of her husband, Thomas, to the Diocese, the Foundation Stone was laid on 29th October 1932 and the first service held in the church on Christmas morning 1932. The Bishop of Dover conducted the Service of Dedication on 5th February 1933. The Freemasons financially supported the building of the church and continue to hold a biannual service led by their own chaplain and they make a small donation to St Thomas Church annually.

To commemorate the Millennium, stained glass windows were installed in the church and dedicated by the then Archbishop of Canterbury. The church has its own organist and a Reader who regularly leads Morning Prayer and assists with the Eucharist services unless required to lead Morning Prayer at one of the other Churches.



Due to its size and adaptability St Thomas Church is used for a wide variety of parish activities including Messy Church, coffee morning, training activities, concerts, etc. The furniture can be rearranged and there is a very efficient audio-visual system. St Thomas is lucky to have many of the congregation who are keen to participate in the Church's life – it is a lively community which is supportive of one another. Many enjoy reading the lessons, leading intercessions, or acting as server, sidesperson or coffee maker. Everyone is known and newcomers and visitors are made very welcome.

Each of our churches has its own local committee which meets regularly and reports to the PCC. These are chaired by the Local Church Wardens in the case of St Thomas and All Saints and a Reader at St Mildred's.

Links with Birchington Primary School are strong, with three members of the PCC being foundation governors.

THE VICARAGE – 15 Minnis Road, Birchington.

The Vicarage is on the road to Minnis Bay, with easy access to all three churches and with the shops situated close by.

The 1960s house has four bedrooms, a large lounge dining room which can be sectioned off with a lightweight door. The kitchen is also big, with room for a dining table. The study and facilities are adjacent to the front door.

There is a garage and parking to the front of the property and a reasonable garden situated at the rear.

The house is full of natural light and the gardens sunny.



THE ISLE OF THANET

The Isle of Thanet offers many facilities from a shopping centre, Dreamland Theme Park, to its Turner Contemporary Gallery. Beautiful harbours and beaches can be found around its coast. There are numerous cinemas, theatres and sports facilities, designated cycle paths and a major district hospital.

THE VILLAGES

Birchington on Sea

Birchington-on-Sea is still a village, although it has a population of 11,000 residents with a large proportion of elderly and retired. The population will increase by a considerable amount with the proposed plans for extra housing to be built. This is being fought by residents as we will lose our lovely open fields.

There are many organisations and groups within The Village which are very active. Birchington is fortunate to have two first class schools both of which deliver a high standard of education. There are also two grammar schools in Thanet.

Apart from the halls attached to the churches in Birchington, we have a very good Community Centre used by the parish which is independent of any local authorities or Kent County Council.

Birchington has a Parish Council with ten Councillors. The Councillors are very involved with the local community and work hard for the good of the residents. The Village is served by a local Community Warden and P.S.C.O. who are in Birchington on most days, but always available by phone or email for any issues.

Birchington has a comprehensive Medical Centre which houses Doctors and skilled Nurse Practitioners. Birchington is well known for its community spirit and friendly atmosphere.

Acol Village

The small village of Acol lies between Birchington and Minster and at present has between 300 and 400 hundred residents. There is a vibrant village hall which is booked everyday with many classes and groups.

One of the main groups within the village is the 'Acol Horticultural Society' which has been running since 1967. The society offers three shows a year, two of which are still held under canvas and create a lovely atmosphere. It also holds monthly meetings and events throughout the year. Villagers are proud of their little village once known as 'An island within a sea of cauliflowers'.

Minnis Bay

The seaside of Birchington is reached passing beyond the vicarage and under the railway bridge.

Minnis Bay is well known for its safe, clean and 'Blue Badge' beach, lined by colourful beach huts and enjoys spectacular sunsets.

There is a thriving community attracting locals and visitors far and wide for a good day out.

There are active sailing and windsurfing clubs.



CHURCHES TOGETHER

All the churches and denominations in the parish are represented, mainly by lay representatives and some clergy on the Churches Together in Birchington committee which meets to plan combined activities and worship throughout the year. The Parish has appointed three lay representatives, one from each church, to sit on this group.



Advent sees the united service in the Village Centre, and then in January all the churches host a coffee morning throughout the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity culminating with a celebration service. Lent groups are organised across the denominations. On Good Friday walks of witness from every church in the village are made, arriving at the village centre for worship.

For two weeks in the Summer all the churches play host to, and support, the annual Scripture Union summer camp.

Other events of an ecumenical nature include World Day of Prayer in March and the Christmas Tree Festival in December.

The Parish supports the collection of food and household products for the Foodbank based at the Baptist Church in the village.

The churches in Birchington are preparing to be part of the Thanet-wide mission planned for 2020.

PASTORAL GROUP

This is a small group from the three churches which meets on a regular basis to check on those on the prayer list, discuss any others who need support of any kind and arrange any help needed. Often cards and flowers are sent and we pray for those on the prayer list and others who do not wish to be on the list but we know and of course, God knows.

Monthly visits are made by teams to the three Birchington residential homes. A programme of themed talks is given mainly following the church's year with reading, pictures, objects to handle, music and prayers. For those unable to attend church we make sure that there is the opportunity to receive Communion at home or in residential homes administered by Readers and ALMs.

SCRIPTURE UNION BEACH MISSION

Hundreds of children descend on Minnis Bay each August for the annual two-week ministry of the Scripture Union team. They are based at St Thomas in Kearns Hall and leaders visit each Church on a Sunday during their stay. The final service, led by the team, is held in All Saints Church on the final evening.

This year, 2019, it was the 125th year that a beach mission has come to Minnis Bay, and it is now run for a fortnight by a Scripture Union team. It has grown remarkably over the last decade, last year 503 attendances were recorded. The mission is supported by all the different denominations in Birchington who offer premises at their churches so that 5 age groups, from 0 to 18 years, can be catered for.



The mission has had a huge effect on the community over the years with local people offering support in many ways to make it a success eg offering beds for team members, providing cake or serving in the in-house cafe. Now there is a large group of local young people on the team, most of whom came up through the mission as children and want to spread the Good News to others in a fun way.

GROUPS USING OUR CHURCHES

Our Church School

Birchington Church of England Primary School uses the church approximately six times a year for services and at other times to rehearse and to support the curriculum. The school uses All Saints regularly but has visited the other Churches both to support the curriculum and for special occasions, such as the Tree Festival at St. Thomas.

The children lead the services that usually happen at the end of terms, but the school is always grateful for the presence of Clergy and Foundation Governors to lead final prayers and blessings.

The Church annually presents a bible to the year 6 leavers at their special service in July.



Birchington Heritage Trust

We have close contact with the Birchington Heritage Trust and one of our congregation is actively involved and is nominated as our Church Archivist. She has produced many booklets on the history of All Saints and has a wealth of information on all three churches and the village.

Children's Groups

Air Scouts, Cubs, Scouts, Rainbows, Brownies and Girl Guide groups often ask to be shown around the Churches, mainly All Saints, followed by an activity set by their leader. This helps the young people to achieve one of the new badges. Some of these groups meet in Church House but are not affiliated to the Church. All these groups send representatives to the annual Remembrance Day Parade and Church Service.

Concerts

As well as our fund-raising concerts for the Church, Thanet Male Voice Choir have often held concerts in All Saints Church. The female equivalent, The Harmony Choir, has hosted concerts in St Thomas Church. The Parish is always happy to facilitate these types of activities whenever possible.



Church Study/Teaching Groups

St Thomas is ideal for small groups to come together to study and learn. Lent groups, a Deepening Discipleship Course run by the Diocese, and Chislet Church have all used St Thomas for this purpose in the last few months. One of the retired clergy often leads study groups at All Saints, St Thomas or elsewhere in the Diocese.

REGULAR CHURCH ACTIVITIES AND SOCIETIES

Men's Supper Club



Men's Supper Club was set up over 30 years ago to provide an opportunity for men to meet for friendship and fellowship. Meetings are held every two months in Church House in the evening and the members cook for themselves. Core membership consists of members of the congregation or their partners from the three Birchington churches. A number of members are not regular churchgoers and this club therefore provides an opportunity for outreach into the local community

Parish Breakfasts

The parish breakfasts were originally set-up over 10 years ago as an opportunity for men to meet up for fellowship and friendship. Soon after organisation of these was taken over by the chair of the All Saints committee and the breakfasts were opened to all. Breakfasts are held at Quex Barn six times a year and the meals are followed by a speaker.

The topics of the talks each year are a mix of 'faith-based' and general interest. Attendance is typically 40-50 and is drawn from the three parish churches as well as members of the other Christian churches in Birchington and Westgate. All are welcome and a number of attendees have no links with any church. Like the Men's Supper Club, these breakfasts are also an opportunity for outreach to other local churches as well as the local community



The Birchington Handbell Ringers

The Birchington Handbell Ringers are an enthusiastic group who meet regularly on a Tuesday evening from the spring to December. The group rings an eclectic range of music for all seasons but generally enjoy Christmas time as the busiest. The ringers are invited to ring at carol services, concerts and local community events.

All Saints Art Group

This is a popular group of 18 amateur artists in the parish who meet in Church House on a Friday afternoon to paint together. For the last few years the group has staged a very popular exhibition of work in Church House over the August Bank Holiday weekend to which visitors from a wide area come to view and perhaps buy the exhibits.

The Bell Ringers

The All Saints Bell Ringers meet to practise on a Tuesday evening from 7.30 – 9.00 and ring before every Sunday morning service as well as when required at weddings & other extra services. With new recruits enlisted during the recent "Ringing Remembers" campaign, we now have 8 learners within the total of 18 or so regulars.

All Saints Toddlers

All Saints Toddlers welcomes babies, children under school age, their parents, grandparents and carers to Church House on Thursday mornings, in term time. The little ones enjoy play, activities, story and refreshment whilst the adults have a chance to talk and make new friends. This is often their first introduction into church. The highlight of the year is a New Year party.

Blend Coffee Group

This is an informal group of parishioners who meet or just drop in for fellowship in Blend Coffee Shop in the village on a Tuesday morning. Firm friendships have developed and this has led to many of the group enjoying short holiday hotel breaks together.

Junior Church

At present up to a dozen children aged 4yrs to 11yrs meet in Church House on Sunday mornings for "their church". The children follow the "Roots" scheme, which follows the lectionary and provides ideas for drama, games and creative activities. On the first Sunday of the month the children take part in the Family Service in All Saints Church, where they help the sides-persons in giving out books and taking the collection.

The Junior Church supports the Children's Society all year and Water Aid during Lent and help make 200 Christingles at Christmas, one of our largest outreach services. Sometimes they are invited to read the lesson.

Cameo - Come and Meet Each Other

This group is open to all ladies of the parish. They meet in each other's homes in the evening of the 1st Thursday of the month. A varied programme includes talks or demonstrations from local people and in the summer, they have outdoor activities or local informative walks. During meetings, 5p's are collected to support charities such as the Pilgrims Hospice.

All Saints Church Choir



The church choir currently has about 12 members. They sing at all the main services including leading the congregational hymns and sing hymns and/or anthems during the Communion. The choir supports our busy Easter and Christmas schedules. They also support the regular combined services in the village. Choir practice is on a Friday evening.

St. Thomas Open Church and Coffee Morning

The church is open on a Friday morning for coffee for all. These open church mornings often are fund raising events for charity – Rose Nose Day, Children in Need and The World's Biggest Coffee Morning for example. Members from all three churches attend and there is often the opportunity to welcome visitors and new people to the area into the church.

Messy Church

Children from school years 2 to 8 are welcomed to our Messy Church – some children bring an adult to join in with the activity, but most parents arrive in time for the reflection and the

Peace. For these children it is their Church time - some go on to be baptised and we hope that some may come to the church to be confirmed. The children always enjoy a practical activity – often messy and then a time of teaching, reflection and then share the Peace together before ending the session.



CHURCH FINANCES

The parish accounts for 2018 were presented to the APCM in late April. A copy of these is available from the churchwardens. Our **2017** accounts have been registered with the Charity Commission and can be viewed online.

In the past our parish share has been paid in full. With the demise of some of our generous parishioners it is becoming clear that new ways of raising funds must be found.

Fortunately, there is approximately £400,000 in endowments, the interest of which can be used.

Our planned giving is well supported with 49 parishioners paying monthly/quarterly by standing order and approximately 45 giving in weekly envelopes. In 2018 our income from these was £36,390. Significant funds are raised from lettings of the two halls, various quizzes, recycling and a 100 club.

The Christmas tree festival raises funds for local charities.

The parish supports the Helwel Trust, an organisation based in northern KwaZulu Natal in South Africa.

COMMUNICATION

The Parish has improved communication with the congregations, visitors and with those who do not attend Church. There is a volunteer who acts as a communications officer and who makes sure that items are placed on the website, in the pew notices and in the Parish Magazine.

Parish Website – All Saints Birchington.

The local Churchwardens post information sent to them on the website which has been re - designed and re - launched. Information about services, news, history and other information is available. It is hoped that our new priest in charge will be able to contribute to this with maybe a regular blog or sermon notes perhaps? www.allsaintsbirchington.com

The Parish Magazine

This is produced eleven times a year by a husband and wife team who gather news from the churches, promote activities that are occurring in the month and report on many of those activities the following month. There is a directory of useful names, roles and contact information, service times for the visitor and a piece from the priest in charge which is always read with great interest. To cover costs, we charge 50p per copy and raise additional funds by charging for advertising from local trades people.

The Pew Notices

These are on the back of the weekly readings sheet. Our Parish administrator produces these highlighting the week's events. The Prayer list is on this sheet and notices of those to be baptised and married as well as those who have died in the Parish that week and their funeral arrangements when known plus other pertinent notices.

St Mildred's Facebook Page

Set up by St Mildred's for St Mildred's Church attendees – whether regulars or occasional visitors. This is administered by the Reader based regularly at the Church and provides news and information about the Church and Acol.

Seamarsh Newsletter

This is a new venture and we hope to bring out a monthly news sheet about activities across the eight churches making up the new Seamarsh Ministry team as we start our journey together and get to know one another.

PARISH PERSONNEL

Parish Church Wardens	Lorraine Bant and Michael Little
Retired Clergy	Revd. David Frost and Revd. Dr. Sue Woan and Revd. Peter Russell
Reader Ministers	Margaret Hawkins and Jim Barber
Authorised Lay Ministry	Angela Webster, Paul Webster and John Hawkins
Local Church Wardens	All Saints - David Alker St. Thomas – Chris Hedges
Verger	Geoff Pegg
Director of Music	Tim Attride
Organists	Tim Attride, Chris Hedges and Lynda McGowan
PCC Secretary	John Hawkins
Treasurer	Sara Gower
Electoral Roll Officer	Geoff Pegg
Safeguarding Officer	Lorraine Bant
Parish Administrator	Sue Murphy

We have two paid employees who are both appraised annually by our priest in charge and a churchwarden. Both have job descriptions.

Our Parish Administrator works out of Church House where the Parish Office is situated. She is employed for weekday mornings only. She also sits on the Pastoral committee.

Our Director of Music is our other paid employee.



AN INTRODUCTION TO BIRCHINGTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Birchington CE Primary School is a happy successful school where emotional well-being and our caring Christian ethos is at the heart of everything we do. Our Christian Values of Peace, Hope and Forgiveness and our School Values of Respect, Responsibility, Equality, Being Unique and Making Safe Choices underpin our exciting, active curriculum. We offer a wide range of school clubs, sporting events and arts and music activities and our grounds are extensive and really well utilised. We are currently expanding to three forms of entry in every year group, adding a class each year.



We were proud to be rated as Outstanding in our most recent SIAMs Church Inspection with the report stating, "Outstanding care and support by the staff team for all pupils and their families, especially those experiencing any kind of difficulty, means that any potential barriers to their success are minimised. Pupils' spiritual development is nurtured well in a variety of practical ways, enabling pupils to play an important part in defining the Christian character of the school.

as Good with Outstanding features in our most recent Ofsted Inspection. Ofsted said of our school, "Birchington's friendly and inclusive atmosphere ensures that pupils feel extremely safe and



valued. Pupils' highly positive attitudes to learning mean they make the most of school life. They are extremely well mannered and polite and behave exceptionally well."



We have strong links with our local church and community and it is really important to us that our local Priest plays a really active part in school life; visiting regularly, providing pastoral support and prayer for pupils and staff, regularly taking part in Collective Worship, hosting church visits and worship in church and bringing the life of the Christian Church into the day to day life of our school.



Anyone visiting, working or learning in our school is warmly welcomed; we have a friendly, open approach, embrace and promote a love of learning and do all we can to provide our pupils with exciting learning opportunities, a clear sense of teamwork, spirituality and care for one another.

THE SEAMARSH GROUP MINISTRY

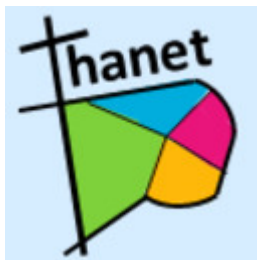
*The Church of England in
Acol, Birchington, Minnis Bay, Chislet, Minster, Monkton,
St Nicholas-at-Wade and Westgate-on-Sea*

This is an exciting time for the churches in the western end of the Thanet Deanery. In recent years we have been investigating how we can work more closely together to support each other in the mission and ministry of God's church and creating a model that is sustainable in the future. This has led to the creation of The Seamarsh Group Ministry at the start of Advent 2018. Why Seamarsh? The name is what geographically holds us together – the sea and the marsh.

Key to this is the working together of licensed clergy forming a local chapter. The clergy have been meeting for lunch and spending time listening and supporting each other and looking at any issues arising across the Group. We do this 2 – 3 times a month and the new Priest in Charge at Birchington would be expected to become part of this.

As part of the Group Ministry each parish currently maintains its own PCC and independent finances. Although the clergy work together to look at the provision of ministry across all the Group, the ministry of the new Priest in Charge will focus primarily on Birchington with Acol and Minnis Bay. Once an appointment has been made at Birchington we will be continuing discussions with the Steering Group and PCCs to look at the feasibility of creating a single team Parish across the Seamarsh Group.

We look forward with prayerful expectation to welcoming a new colleague to the group particularly someone with collaborative gifts and a view for what might be possible as the new Seamarsh Group Ministry continues to develop. If you would like to talk further about this, please contact Revd Richard Braddy (Co-Area Dean) 01843 821250.



THANET DEANERY

Thanet Deanery is the largest in the Canterbury Diocese and is made up of 26 churches which are divided into four clusters: Margate, Broadstairs, Ramsgate and The Villages. This is an exciting time for the Deanery as it begins to explore how we can work together within each cluster. This will enable individual churches to retain their own distinctive identity, whilst partnerships within each town or area will encourage collaborative working between churches and enable better sharing of resources necessary for ministry and mission.

The Deanery has established a number of creative and pioneering mission projects. For example, the Ignite Project – a Fresh Expression of Church at St Paul's, Cliftonville and St Christopher's, Newington and also an outreach project at St George's, Ramsgate.

Thanet itself is a unique geographical area that still keeps an island mentality century after the Wantsum channel silted up that had once divided it from the mainland. Thanet is diverse

in many ways and whilst there are pockets of wealth there are many areas, mainly the seaside towns, that are amongst the most impoverished in the country, each giving the Deanery many exciting and sometimes difficult challenges.

The Deanery is supported with two Co-Area Deans and Lay Chair who have responsibility for their own areas of the Deanery as well as working closely together for the wider community. Synods meet regularly and are generally well attended. The Deanery also has a Mission and Ministry Committee that represents all four clusters and deals with the wider issues of placements, parish share and benefices as well as looking at our general continual vision at how we might support each other in mission. Thanet Deanery also supports the work of the Church Army; through the Thanet Centre of Mission, the Church Army plays a key role in providing many activities around the Deanery which all can participate in.

Clergy chapters meet regularly on differing days and locations so that we experience each other's parishes. These occasions are a friendly way in which we can share what is going on around the Deanery as well as being a prayerful support to each other, sharing the ups and downs of everyday ministry.

We would be delighted to meet and welcome any new appointee as they become part of the family of the wider church here in Thanet and we look forward to you sharing your gifts with us as we work with you and support you in prayer.

Reverend Richard Braddy and Reverend Clifford Stocking, *Co Area Deans*



Description

Canterbury Diocese, the oldest diocese in England, stretches from Maidstone to Thanet, the Isle of Sheppey to the Romney Marsh and includes 328 churches in 253 parishes, along with 103 church schools, organised in to 15 deaneries and three archdeaconries, Ashford, Maidstone and Canterbury.

Whilst the Archbishop of Canterbury is the diocesan bishop, day to day oversight of the diocese is delegated to the Bishop of Dover. The Queen has approved the appointment of the Reverend Rose Hudson-Wilkin, Chaplain to the Speaker of the House of Commons, as the next Bishop of Dover.



Rose will succeed the Rt Revd Trevor Willmott who retired from the role in May this year. She will be consecrated in a service at St Paul's Cathedral on 19 November and installed at Canterbury Cathedral on 30 November.

Objectives

Encompassed by the statement: living faith, building community, transforming lives, the Diocese of Canterbury is committed:

- To grow the church numerically and spiritually.
- To re-imagine ministry.
- To build partnerships that enrich communities.

In 2017, after over a year of prayerful conversation and discernment, our Synod further refined these priorities for the next season of our life together in mission '*Changed Lives*→ *Changing Lives*'. We committed ourselves

- To be a people renewed in missional prayer across our Diocese.
- To grow our Diocesan Ignite ministry, which is reaching the most marginalised in our communities with the good news of Jesus Christ.
- To specific evangelism and discipleship initiatives with teenagers.

- To ensuring that the extensive lay and ordained leadership training opportunities which we currently offer meet the outcomes of our priorities.
- To develop an innovations hub which offers resources to equip local mission.

Ministry is well underway under each of these priorities.

Frameworks

To facilitate the achievement of these objectives, the work of the diocese is focussed into four key 'frameworks':

- Children and Young People
- Local Church Development
- Licensed Ministries
- Communities and Partnership

All these are supported by our Diocesan staff team.

These frameworks replace the traditional concept of Boards and Committees and represent a flexible way of working for the Diocese with communication and collaboration at its heart.

Mission Action Planning

The Diocese uses Mission Action Planning as a process and planning tool to help deaneries, benefices and parishes prayerfully review and choose, plan and act on mission activities that will help further the objectives of the Diocese, Deaneries and benefices are supported to this end by Deanery Mission Accompaniers.

We are looking to the way ahead with faith and hope as we seek to be a people united in Christ, celebrating our diversity and reaching out to local communities with the good news of the kingdom.

Further information www.canterburydiocese.org

