



SAINT LAURENCE
THE PARISH CHURCH OF UPMINSTER
PARISH PROFILE



St Laurence Church website: upminsterparish.co.uk

St Laurence, Upminster Vision and Mission Statement

To make St Laurence a visible and welcoming centre of Christian worship and prayer, that in an atmosphere of respect and inclusiveness, demonstrates the power of the Holy Spirit and the love of God

Spiritual: Draw people closer to God through:

- A focus on Eucharistically-based services suitable for all ages.
- Teaching and spiritual leadership.
- Remembering the needs of others locally and globally.
- Social events that promote fund-raising and working together.
- Stewardship.

Growth:

- Be a visible presence in the Parish.
- Reaching out through Baptisms, Marriages, Funerals, School Work and Youth Groups by promoting an understanding of the spiritual meaning and value of the Church.
- Parish Web-site.

Buildings & Plant: Enhance: quality; spirituality; heritage and accessibility.

Finance: Engender financial commitment for Parish needs and the Parish Quota.

The Parish

Upminster is a suburban town on the eastern outskirts of Greater London in the London Borough of Havering and borders on the Green Belt, a Conservation area and the Thames Chase. Historically, it is thought Upminster was so named after the first St Laurence's Church, established here in 653 AD. It remained a crossroads village until the early 20th century when large-scale residential development commenced. Most of the properties are owner occupied. Upminster was part of the County of Essex until the 1965 boundary reorganisation. It is close to the M25 and approximately six miles from the Dartford Crossing.

The parish has a population of about 13,000, some of whom are third or fourth generation Upminster families. However, because the town is within comfortable commuting distance from London, many families have moved here and have no family support or other connections in the area. Many of the working population commute to London (15 miles) and are served by the District Line Underground and the main line C2C service from Shoeburyness to Fenchurch Street (25 mins). There are also local bus and rail services to Romford, Grays and Lakeside Retail Shopping Centre. Transport in London is currently free to those who are sixty or over.

In view of the relatively high cost of housing, many young people move away from Upminster when they become independent, hence in recent times there has been a tendency for the average age of the population to increase. This is evidenced by the number of homes for the elderly in the area.

Upminster is fortunate to be well served by excellent Infant, Junior and Secondary schools including a Roman Catholic girls' school and a school (in our neighbouring parish) which, as part of their admission policy, asks for regular attendance at a place of worship.

A hospital is located in Romford (4 miles). There are also two private hospitals within 6 miles.

The South Essex Crematorium and Upminster Cemetery are within the parish.

The community is served by an independent department store, two supermarkets and a variety of smaller shops, all of which are affected by the vast shopping complex at Lakeside, 5 miles away. There are a number of estate agents, financial services and 2 post offices. In addition there are multiple coffee shops, restaurants, take-aways, petrol stations, off-licences and pubs.

For leisure purposes there are two recreation grounds and facilities for various sporting activities. There are a number of other social amenities available in the area for all age ranges, and a public library next to the church. Of historical interest there is a windmill which is currently being restored and a tithe barn containing a museum of local artefacts, both of which are open to the public at various times during the year. The Old Chapel, built in 1800 for Protestant Dissenters, has recently been restored and is now used for temporary exhibitions, educational talks, open days and family events.

The Church in Upminster is actively represented by all major denominations, most of which participate in Churches Together in Upminster, Cranham and North Ockendon. The clergy from the individual churches meet regularly. Churches Together also sponsors the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and Women's World Day of Prayer. An ecumenical Procession of Witness takes place through Upminster on Good Friday to an open-air service attended by several hundred people.



The Church

St. Laurence's Church was established by St Cedd in 653 AD.

It is a Grade I listed building set at the crossroads in the centre of the town.



Notable past incumbents include members of the Holden family, who were the Rectors for nearly 200 years (and retain the patronage to this day) and William Derham, who measured the speed of sound from the church tower.

The tower is 12th century, the St. Mary's Chapel was built in 1771 and subsequent additions were made right into the 20th century. The church was completely refurbished and redecorated early in 1992 and 2002–03 saw major re-ordering of the chancel with the provision of a new 2 manual 24-stop organ by Kenneth Tickell.

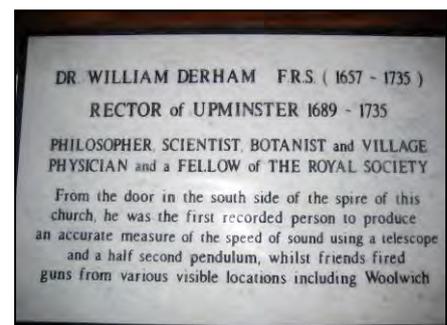


To the south of the High Altar, there is a small St. George's Chapel; to the north, a Lady Chapel with Reserved Sacrament and a votive stand. On Sundays, services are conducted and Communion administered at the moveable Nave Altar.



Weekday daytime services are held in the Lady Chapel. The church is open from 9am until 5pm daily and receives a good number of visitors who call in to look around, pray and light candles.

The tower has 4 bells, the earliest of which was cast in 1460, which are not now hung for full circle ringing.



Worship

Sundays	Weekdays
Said Holy Communion 08.00	Tuesday Mass 10.30
Sung Parish Mass 09.30 Sunday School (Adventurers)	Wednesday Mass 11.00
Baptisms (where requested) 12.00	
Evening Service 18.30 (This may be BCP Evensong (said, sung or choral), Taizé, Compline (said or sung), and has on recent occasions been a meditative Youth Service or a Children's Service at an earlier time. Quarterly, we have Solemn Evensong with Benediction.)	Morning and Evening Prayer are usually said at 8.45am and 5pm, Monday to Thursday.
	Monthly
	Celtic Worship Mondays 19.30
	Time for God Saturday 09.00 Daily Office

The church has an open Catholic tradition, with a strong grounding in the sacraments. Some of our clergy have been members of the Society of Catholic Priests and Affirming Catholicism. The main Parish Eucharist is celebrated with incense, bells and, on Feast days, a procession. There is a strong musical tradition. The choir has a wide and challenging repertoire and continues to grow under the leadership of our Director of Music and Assistant Organist.



The choir at St Peter's Chapel, Bradwell

We have a team of servers in which the children are actively encouraged to play a part.

Congregational booklets have been produced for each liturgical season. The hymn books we use are Hymns Old & New and New English Hymnal, sometimes supplemented from elsewhere.

There are on average 80-90 communicants at the Parish Mass (though attendance is usually above 100 and sometimes well over) and 15-20 at the 8.00am Holy Communion. The Sacrament is taken to the housebound from the Parish Mass by licensed Eucharistic Ministers. Weekday services vary from about 4 to 15. Parade services with the uniformed organisations happen five times a year with 250- 300 attending, and on Christmas Eve there are two crib services which attract a combined total of about 700.

Our services can be described as 'modern Catholic'. We hope we are an open, friendly and welcoming church. Beyond the regular congregations there are many occasional attenders who look to St Laurence as 'their' church, particularly in times of celebration or need.

Baptisms take place either during the 9.30 am Parish Mass or, more commonly, at 12 noon with the Welcome and giving of the baptism candle happening at the Parish Mass the following Sunday.

We have a growing Sunday School known as 'Adventurers' which takes place during the Parish Mass. Those old enough have been prepared and admitted to Communion before Confirmation. Young people are involved in various aspects of leading worship and we aspire to enable the Parish Mass to be an intergenerational act of worship. We have however recently tried an occasional Youth Service and an afternoon Children's Service as ways to engage more specifically with those age groups. The future of these is under discussion.

Time for God is a monthly prayer diary which is used in conjunction with the Daily Office. Approximately 30 members of the congregation receive the prayer diary. Each month the Daily Office is held in church on a Saturday morning at 9.00 am for those participants who can attend.



Good Friday Children's Workshop

Once a month, non-Eucharistic services are held at two local residential homes for the elderly. These are very well received by the staff and popular with residents.

Celtic Worship is a monthly contemplative service, seeking to draw on the tradition to which St Cedd belonged.

Throughout the year, additional services are held for festivals, during Lent, Easter and Christmas. Once a week during Lent, Stations of the Cross are said jointly with the nearby Roman Catholic Church.

Each year, St Laurence hosts a small number of weddings (currently, five are booked for 2018). We usually have around 30 baptisms a year, and an average of 1-2 funerals a month, which may be in church or at the crematorium. We are also asked to inter ashes in the churchyard or at the cemetery from time to time.

Coffee, tea and soft drinks are served in the Main Hall after the Parish Mass on Sundays. We are registered as a Fairtrade Parish and use Fairtrade fresh coffee and tea at all parish meetings and social events. There is a weekly Friday coffee morning open to the wider community.

Modules of the Pilgrim course were run in 2015 and 2016, and in 2017 we had a Bible study group focusing on Philippians. There are often study/discussion groups during Lent, and a 'summer/winter read' – where people are encouraged to read a novel and then meet to discuss it. A number of retreats and quiet days have taken place in previous years too.

Three adults and one young person were confirmed in 2017. The parish has offered placements to various people from other churches (including non-Anglican) exploring vocation or training

for ministry, and we currently have an ordinand based with us during his formation – he is due to be ordained and to move to another parish this summer.

The Congregation

The Electoral Roll stands at around 190 with about a third living outside the parish. A fair proportion of the congregation is retired but there is diversity across the age range and a growing number of families and younger people, many of whom are actively involved in a variety of ways.

The congregation assists in the life of the church, including serving, singing in the choir, reading lessons, leading intercessions, acting as sidespeople, flower arranging, church cleaning, brass cleaning, laundry, and churchyard maintenance. In addition, a number are licensed by the Bishop to assist with the administration of Communion, and to take the Sacrament to the housebound.

Mission and Ministry

Having an Anglo-Catholic understanding of mission, we aspire to live and share the Gospel in all that we do as a church (from the mundane to the adventurous), to be present for and in our parish, and to help each other to discern God at work in all the places and people that are part of our lives. We take guidance from the Diocesan 'Transforming Presence' initiative, and as part of this have been giving particular attention, as requested by the Diocese, to how we are 'serving with accountability'. The PCC has a 'Mission and Ministry' task group which gives especial consideration to ways of connecting with the local community.

In June 2017 the PCC had an Away Day looking at the 'Growing Healthy Churches' material. This resulted in a number of short and long-term objectives. At present much of our mission is around growing and enhancing what we already do, but with additional leadership there could be scope for looking beyond this as well.

The Diocese is also encouraging neighbouring parishes to form Mission and Ministry Units (MMUs) and find ways of working together more closely. We are in discussion with three neighbouring parishes about this but nothing has been formalised as yet, although the incumbents meet regularly and we have organised some joint events. We value relationships with our neighbouring churches, both those in the Deanery and of other denominations.

Some of our specific forms of outreach and mission, in addition to those things mentioned under 'Worship' include:

A Parish magazine, "Gridiron", is published 6 times a year by a team of volunteer editors. Over 200 copies are produced and e-copies are sent worldwide. The magazine is available on our website. It contains a large proportion of home-produced material and advertisements for local businesses. It is currently self-financing. We also produce a weekly pewsheet "Porchtalk" which is also available on our website.

The church is used as a centre of music including our weekly series of lunchtime concerts, led by our Director of Music who is an internationally acclaimed organist. We have links with the Havering Music School and many other musical organisations. Local schoolchildren and other groups use the church for concerts, including at Christmas.

We have had good links with schools but some have lapsed and this is something we hope to develop. A number of primary schools organise visits to the church, and clergy have done some

school assemblies. Some of the local churches including St Laurence support Scripture Union in an initiative called 'Life Path' involving local primary school children. This event takes place over a couple of days in June each year. We have also been involved in a Churches Together initiative providing a prayer room for primary aged children.

The local uniformed organisations which meet in our church halls also visit the church periodically, apart from for Church Parade, in order to learn about its meaning and history, and sometimes invite the clergy to share in significant events in the life of their groups.

During Lent, we hold weekly soup lunches, open to everyone. The lunches are free of charge, but donations are invited for our Lent Charity. The lunches attract approx. 35 - 40 people each week.

There is a nominated 'Charity of the Month' each month to which people are invited to donate. The church also makes a particular commitment to supporting the Children's Society. We also support the local foodbank, and hold special collections of money/food/presents for various charities to coincide with particular times in the Church's year.

On the social side we hold a varied programme of events including parish lunches, quizzes, a cream tea, a Parish Barbeque and a summer family event.



Parish Lunch



*Family Fun Morning in aid of
The Children's Society*



Harvest boxes for the Harold Hill Foodbank

The Buildings

Accommodation

The PCC owns a 3-bedroomed semi-detached house within half a mile of the church, which is for use by curates and assistant clergy. This is the house which would be made available as part of this post.



The Church and grounds

The church is mainly in good repair. We are in the process of planning a major building project which aims to provide a community meeting room, much needed accessible toilet facilities and enlarged vestries which can enhance what we offer for congregation members and visitors – particularly the young and the elderly. We have planning permission and are currently trying to raise the £650,000 required.

There is a Parish Office which is staffed on a part time basis, providing administrative services and support, a meeting area and a welcome to visitors.

There are 4 church halls (with limited car parking) which are hired and used by the local community as well as by the church. The hall hire provides a substantial part of our income.

Staffing

The current Rector, the Revd Susannah Brasier, has been in post since February 2015.

We have a Pastoral Assistant who works closely with the Rector. Employed staff consist of a Parish Administrator, a Director of Music, an Assistant Organist, a Publicity Officer and a Church Halls Booking Secretary.

The PCC

The PCC is actively involved with planning and organisation within the church. Full meetings are held 5 times a year. It is complemented by the Central Management and Finance Group, and the Mission and Ministry Group.

There is a representative of the PCC available after the Parish Mass every Sunday to receive comments to pass on to the PCC.

Expenses and Income

The parish quota is paid in full; reasonable clergy expenses are met, as are the remuneration for the paid staff. The parish quota for 2018 is £86,136.96. Congregational giving alone is insufficient to raise this so we are very dependent on income from the church halls. We have regular stewardship campaigns to encourage people to consider their giving of time, talents and money.

The congregation is encouraged to sponsor certain items of expenditure for specified periods to assist with funding.

Looking to the future

Within Upminster there is a reasonably strong sense of community and a sense of support and goodwill towards the Church. The Church has contact with a wide range of people and groups and is privileged to be involved in joyful, routine and difficult moments in people's lives. We need to find ways, though, to continue to build on existing contacts, to maintain good pastoral contact and availability and to be more proactive and creative in seeking to form and deepen connections with individuals and groups.

There is also a need to offer ongoing regular, focused formational opportunities both for those who are regular churchgoers and those who are not, and to find ways to encourage people to explore vocation, both in its broadest sense and in terms of their place within the church community. It is important to ensure that skills, knowledge and roles relating to the church are shared and passed on from one generation to the next.

An Associate Priest is sought to assist with Sunday and midweek services and occasional offices, to provide cover when the Rector has to be elsewhere or on leave, to enhance pastoral ministry and to help to grow links with the wider community.

The following description and specification set out requirements that are specific to this post. It is already assumed that the person appointed would be a priest who takes their calling seriously, is attentive to the words of the Ordinal and would have regard to the general responsibilities of the clergy, including relevant legislation and formational requirements.

Role Description: House-for-Duty Associate Priest

We are seeking someone who is willing to share in the priestly ministry required by the parish and to be part of our mission to be a church that is available for and visible within the local community.

This post is initially for a term of three years.

Specific duties would include:

- Being present at the 9.30am Parish Mass each Sunday and at least one other Sunday service.
- Sharing in preaching and leading of services, on a rota basis – to include the full range of forms of worship offered at St Laurence.
- Attendance at and leading of Morning and Evening Prayer when ‘on duty’.
- Providing preparation for, and leading, occasional offices.
- Sharing in pastoral ministry – home visiting, offering counsel etc.
- Attendance at staff meetings, PCC and other relevant meetings
- Work with schools and uniformed organisations as appropriate
- Work with catechetical/study groups, as appropriate.
- Involvement in other projects and ministries as seems appropriate and according to experience, skills, interest and the needs of the parish. The person appointed may like to take a lead in at least one particular area of mission and ministry as best suits their gifts and the opportunities present. Possibilities might include work with young people, with young families, with the bereaved or with those who are elderly.
- Providing a degree of general cover, within the time commitment of this post, when the Rector is on leave or needs to be otherwise absent.

There is no stipend for this post but remuneration consists of the provision of rent-free accommodation in the parish’s house. Council tax, water bills and reasonable working expenses will be paid. The priest appointed will be able to access (and in some cases required to make use of) training and support provided by the Diocese of Chelmsford.

The time commitment would be Sundays plus two days or equivalent during the week, with specifics to be negotiated according to circumstance. The holiday entitlement for this post is 6 Sundays and 12 other days. On occasion (e.g. Holy Week) it will be necessary for the Associate Priest to work extra days for which they will be given time off in lieu, but the normal pattern of work will be expected to add up to 3 days per week.

The person appointed is required to work in collaboration with and under the direction of the Rector. They should also be prepared to collaborate with those who have responsibilities in the many areas of lay ministry, and in their own ministry should always be seeking to enable and develop the vocation and ministry of others.

Person Specification: House-for-Duty Associate Priest

Essential:

- Experience of, and appreciation for, parish ministry.
- Comfortable within a modern Anglo-Catholic context; someone who is enlivened and fed by worship of a Catholic nature. Willing to lead and participate in all the forms of worship offered at St Laurence. Able to understand and work within inherited traditions whilst also being open to new developments that can be rooted within Catholic theology and spirituality.
- A proven ability to minister collaboratively and enthusiastically with and alongside others. Able to take initiative, to lead, and to make contributions from own experience and skills, but to do so within a collaborative framework.
- Recognition of the value of pastoral care.
- Experience of ministering to people of all ages.
- Theologically astute and able to communicate theological ideas in an engaging and understandable way.
- An ability to help others to explore faith and vocation.
- Administratively competent and with the ability to use computers for word processing, email, internet access and to produce printed materials to a good standard.
- Able to balance seriousness and light-heartedness, as appropriate!
- Attentive to the self-understanding of the parish, in which teamwork plays an essential part.

Desirable:

- Full driving licence
- Willingness to sing liturgically (e.g. in the Eucharistic Prayer and the leading of Evensong) or openness to trying to learn this skill.