

St Augustine of Canterbury

North Springfield



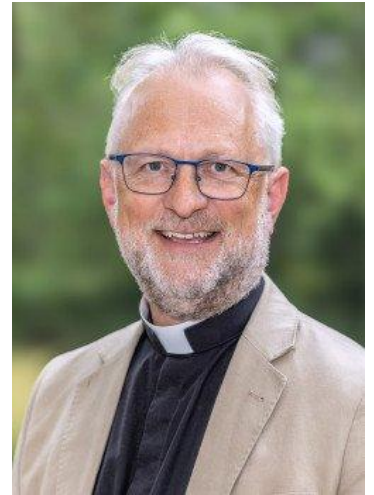
Parish Profile 2026

Parish: 580642

A message from the Ven. Jonathan Croucher, Archdeacon of Chelmsford

I am delighted you are reading this profile and discerning whether St. Augustine's, North Springfield could be the place God is calling you to minister.

The profile speaks honestly of a family of faith that is truly ecumenical, drawing on the different traditions represented on the church council and in the wider parish. It has strong and established links with the local community and is well equipped with experienced and capable lay leadership who will provide encouragement and support to their new priest.



The parish of St Augustine North Springfield is part of the North Chelmsford Mission and Ministry Unit within the deanery of Chelmsford. It is adjacent to and merges with the parish of All Saints Springfield and the successful candidate for this role as Priest in Charge of St. Augustine's will join the MMU team led by All Saint's incumbent Revd Sally Croft as a supportive local clergy community with a commitment to minister across Springfield and Beaulieu Park.

In the Archdeaconry, and across the Bradwell Area, we are seeking to enable flourishing of our congregations and our clergy as we pursue the vision of Travelling Well Together. We hope as you prayerfully consider this role, you will be confident of a warm welcome and strong support from Bishop Adam and from me, along with clergy colleagues across the deanery.

Please do not hesitate to be in touch if you would like to discuss the role further,

THE VENERABLE JONATHAN CROUCHER

ARCHDEACON OF CHELMSFORD

Welcome from the Parish of St Augustine

St Augustine of Canterbury is a welcoming, faithful and community-minded church situated in St Augustine's Way, North Springfield, Chelmsford. We are part of the Diocese of Chelmsford within the Church of England and worship within an ecumenical partnership shared with the Roman Catholic Church, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church. North Springfield is an area in the north of the City of Chelmsford in Essex. Most of the houses were built within the last five decades and now over 4,300 homes are in our parish with newer houses in the Beaulieu Park area and expansion continuing beyond the parish boundary. To the south of our parish is the older, more established area of Springfield.

We have been in vacancy since our last Priest-in-Charge retired in June 2024 and are praying for the Holy Spirit to guide the right person to minister among us. We have been praying, talking and listening to discern what God's plan is for North Springfield and our church family. Although our church community is modest in size, it is rich in commitment, warmth and practical service. We value teamwork, prayer, friendship and a shared desire to serve God and our local community.

The person appointed will have principle responsibility for ministry at St Augustine's as priest-in-charge and ministry lead, and will be a part of a ministry partnership overseen by Revd Sally Croft.

You may be thinking about what plans God has for you in your future ministry and we hope, for us and for you, God will illuminate a path ahead on which he wants us to continue our journey. Whether God intends your path and ours to join, we wish you every blessing on your way.

The Person We Are Praying For

We are praying for a Priest-in-Charge who will:

- Lead worship with prayerfulness, warmth, sensitivity and joyfulness to the breadth of our church community.
- Offer pastoral care and help us strengthen our care for one another and for the wider parish.
- Encourage and equip lay people, recognising the gifts already present in the congregation.
- Support children's, youth and families' ministry alongside a Youth and School Worker (if appointed) and help us rebuild confidence in this area.
- Work positively within an ecumenical setting and nurture good relationships with partner churches.
- Help us grow in mission, outreach and community engagement.
- Communicate clearly, listen well and lead collaboratively during a time of change.
- Bring hope, imagination and spiritual encouragement as we seek God's future for St Augustine's.

About us

We worship in a modern church building that we are pleased to share with our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters. Our congregation includes people whose backgrounds are Anglican, Methodist, URC, and some new Christians with no denominational background but a desire to follow Jesus and show his love to the world and our community. Some of the congregation have been confirmed ecumenically.

We see working with and welcoming others as an important part of our calling and we are keen to continue to work with Christians, churches and others and to further develop strong relationships in the areas around us.

We value our membership of 'Inclusive Church' and we aim to welcome and serve all people and not to discriminate on any grounds.

Our Church Vision

In 2021 we spent some time consulting the wider membership of the church family and compiled the following statement of Our Vision:

Led by the Holy Spirit and underpinned by prayer, we seek to share God's love through varied styles of worship.

We aim to be a nurturing church family which offers spiritual growth and social interaction for all ages.

As an ecumenical, inclusive and diverse Church we aim to show love and support to our community and be stewards of God's creation, working towards a sustainable world.

Our Mission statement is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission.

Our Hopes for the Future

We are grateful for the faithfulness, generosity and resilience of St Augustine's during the vacancy. We believe there are opportunities for renewal, growth and deeper engagement with the local community. We long to see our worshipping life strengthened, our children's and families' ministry encouraged, and our outreach developed with confidence and prayer.

We hope for a minister who will walk with us, listen carefully, encourage lay gifts, and help us discern where God is leading us next. We are looking for someone who can bring pastoral warmth, spiritual depth and a collaborative approach to leadership.

Church life



We are a small congregation; typically, on a Sunday we have about 20 people, but we recognise that over 60 people are part of our worshipping community. Larger numbers get involved at festivals and in activities like Messy Church and children from the Church of England and Roman Catholic primary school opposite worship weekly in the church.

We gather for worship at 10.45am on a Sunday, following the Roman Catholic Mass which finishes at about 10.00am. We are on the Methodist local plan and once a month our worship is led by a Methodist minister or preacher. We are also part of the

URC Chelmsford and South Essex Mission Partnership so our link minister visits us about 3 times a year. We worship together as **one congregation**. We cherish the variety of liturgies we use in our different services.

We use a variety of modern liturgies from various sources. We use a data projector to display the liturgy, bible readings and hymns. There is a sound system and good WiFi. For music during worship we have a mixture of someone playing electronic organ/piano and use YouTube clips.

During term time, our children and young people leave the service after the first hymn to go to our Sunday School which we call Team Rainbow. They rejoin us towards the end of the service to share with the rest of the congregation what they have been doing.

There have been Bible Study Courses, Lent Courses and reflective services at Christmas and Easter in church.



The chapel set up for the start of a service

We are an Inclusive Church and engage with the Chelmsford group of the Progressive Christianity Network which meets monthly. As an ecumenical and forward thinking church, we see the breadth and diversity of people's experience and understanding of God as a blessing, and we value thoughtful exploration of this.

We strive to show that we care for God's creation and in October 2023 we achieved a Silver Award Eco-Church and are continuing to work towards the Gold award.

Our congregation is encouraged to give towards the running of the church by various means: cash, envelopes, Parish Giving Scheme and our contactless giving device.

After Covid, we were aware that some people in the local community were struggling financially so in 2022 as a joint venture with the Roman Catholics, we opened the Little Free Pantry which has the motto – *Give what you can and take what you need*.



We are a warm, welcoming church with God at the heart of everything we do and the opportunities for mission and ministry are great. Our parish stretches over 1.2 sq miles and has a population density of 9,164 people per sq mile, yet too few are touched by the presence of St Augustine's in their midst.

Congregational Leadership

We recognise the calling of all God's people to support and serve the work of the church. We have supportive church wardens, a highly capable treasurer and an excellent Parish Safeguarding Officer.

We have been encouraged to offer our services and talents in organizing and participating in services. Now many lay people lead prayers, read lessons, give talks, lead Sunday morning worship which enables us to enjoy a variety of different styles and voices. One of our congregation has recently started the Course in Christian Studies

Within our congregation there is

- An Anglican Authorised Local Preacher.
- An Ordinand from St Augustine's who is based at All Saints Church Springfield.
- Two lay people authorised to officiate at URC Communion.
- Lay person who is authorised to officiate at URC Baptism

Several of our Church Council have led services and we encourage young people from Team Rainbow to take part in some services.

We have applied for funding from the Methodist Circuit for a Youth and School worker. We are also applying for funding from URC to support this role.

Our Faith into Action

As we continue on our journey, a priority is to develop further our connections with the community around us, finding relevant ways to love and to serve them so that the church may be a blessing and a beacon of God's love in the area.

Once a fortnight, the Pop-up food project, started by St Francis Community at Beaulieu, comes to our car park. For a small cost people join the scheme and can get a variety of food, and household items



A chance to catch up after Sunday morning services

We are committed to working together, ecumenically across denominations and geographically across the parish boundaries that increasingly do not reflect the life of the area. This is both for practical reasons and because we believe that working together in positive relationships is in itself an important witness to others and a joy for us.

We have a diverse congregation with groups like Team Rainbow, Rainbow Tots, Craft and Chat, Bible & Beer and Games Evening. We have held successful social and fund-raising events such as cream teas, quiz nights, Murder-Mystery Harvest supper and Pancake Party. There is outreach to the community through our Little Free Pantry, Pop-Up Food Bus and Messy Church.

We have developed our awareness of our responsibility as stewards of God's creation, and achieved a Silver Award Eco Church in October 2023. We continue to look for ways to be a greener church and hold a service focusing on this at least once a year. Our litter pickers, the 'Springfield Wombles' operate weekly during the summer time.



Springfield Wombles - litter picking once a week as part of our ECO Church Initiative

There are two primary schools in the North Springfield parish: Springfield Primary School and The Bishops' School, which is opposite the church. In addition, in the Beaulieu part of the parish, Beaulieu Park School is the first all through school in Essex.

The Bishops' School is unusual in being a joint Anglican and Catholic church school. The school and church have had close links, with vicars and priests being involved with school services, assemblies, and R.E. lessons. Staff and students come to church every Tuesday morning for worship led by local clergy but assisted by children who write their own prayers. The school helps by advertising church events and we often request the services of the school choir for special church services or fetes. The school has appreciated the involvement and visits from our previous priest in charge and encourages members of our congregation to help with reading and preparing the church for school worship.

Every half term holiday we run a Messy Church which is always well attended and we see it as one of our outreach opportunities. We have looked at a wide variety of themes from Jonah and the whale, Earth, Wind and Air and most recently held a very successful Pancake Party. We have a Craft and Chat group where more chat is done than craft. They meet twice a month.

A group of young parents have started a toddler group, Rainbow Tots, and with the support of the church, they have been meeting once a week for a couple of hours where the toddlers have time to play. Refreshments are provided and for the last part of their meeting, the children are told a biblical based story, sing a song and say prayers.

We have a few fundraising events each year like Cream Teas, Christmas and Summer Fairs, Murder-Mystery Harvest Supper, Quiz nights and Barn Dance. With all these events we try to reach out to the community and involve them.

We have three residential care complexes in our parish. A few of the residents get involved but this area is one of the challenges as since Covid it has been difficult to gain access to the complexes.

We are a small church community and this inevitably limits the people to do the tasks required, our finances and resources. For some years we have been unable to pay our parish share in full and have negotiated a percentage payment. However, there continue to be signs of growth.



At St Augustine there is always time

St Augustine's in context

St Augustine of Canterbury is essentially two communities – the Roman Catholic community and our Anglican, Methodist and URC community, using the same building and sharing the maintenance costs.

Our modern building is large and flexible, with pullback partition walls that can open up the entire church or divide it into two or three separate spaces. For our worship area we use the chapel area which can have a sense of peace but also joyful praise. There is a kitchen area and a large car park.

Opposite St Augustine of Canterbury church is the joint Anglican/RC Bishops' School. A local library and the Springfield Parish Centre (a large community space) is adjacent on the other side. Many children in the area attend The Boswells School, in the parish of All Saints, Springfield, but there is a recently opened all through school, Beaulieu Park School, in the northern section of the parish. There are several private preschool facilities located in the parish

Over the past ten years, a new housing area, Beaulieu, has been developed within the parish. When completed there will be 3,600 homes along its school and commercial areas. Initially the new housing area was distinct from the established housing in North Springfield. A new rail station, Beaulieu Park, opened in 2026 to provide extra links to London and Norwich.

With central funding from the Strategic Development Fund, and with support from a number of neighbouring parishes, the diocese established in 2019 a missional community on the estate led by a full time pioneer minister. A small worshipping community, St Francis, developed and a significant mobile food project emerged from that which began to serve the wider area of Chelmsford. The worshipping community closed in 2023 but the food project continues with diocesan and community support. The boundaries between North Springfield and Beaulieu are becoming increasingly blurred.



2023 - Joint Celebration of the 40th anniversary of the opening of St Augustine of Canterbury



Within our parish there are now two community centres. One is the Springfield Community Centre which is located next to the church and the other is the Beaulieu Park Community Centre to the North of our Parish. There are promising links with the Parish Centre who are keen to work with the church where they can.

Within the parish of North Springfield, most housing is privately owned, with some social housing and a small private rented sector. There is a doctor's surgery and a health centre recently opened plus two dental surgeries.

There are two convenience shopping areas. The one to the south of the parish has a Tesco's Express, a pharmacy, hairdressers and betting shop and is located opposite the only pub in the parish – The Gardeners. The larger shopping hub has a Sainsbury Local, veterinary surgery, chip shop and pizza takeaway plus a couple of coffee houses. There are three residential care complexes including one that caters for people with disabilities and other care needs.

The Vicarage



The vicarage is a short walk from the church across the car park and at the hub of the community having the library and Springfield Parish Centre opposite.

It is a modern, well maintained detached four-bedroomed house with a good sized garden. It has recently been fitted with solar panels, storage battery and heat pump which makes it the greenest vicarage in the Diocese.

It has a garage and ample parking on own driveway for several cars.

From the front door there is a lobby which gives access to a delightful private study with windows front and back. There is a downstairs cloakroom and WC with another lockable entrance door which provides access to the spacious hallway of the living accommodation. On the ground floor there is a roomy kitchen with standalone hob and oven plus space for dishwasher. Off the kitchen is an utility room with space for washing machine and storage plus door to rear garden. Next to the kitchen there is a good sized room that could be used as a dining room, study or extra bedroom. Finally there is an family size lounge with access to the garden via patio doors.



The bedrooms are reached by a wide wooden staircase. Upstairs there is a master bedroom with built in wardrobe and ensuite

shower room. There is a large single bedroom with built in wardrobe, and a double bedroom. The fourth bedroom is a large single bedroom which also could be used as an additional study as it has a telephone point. Finally on this floor there is a family bathroom with in-bath shower and a linen cupboard.



The rear garden has a small patio with mature shrubs and two large trees.

Welcome from the Bishop of Chelmsford

Covering Essex and East London, Chelmsford is one of the largest, most diverse dioceses in the Church of England. We are home to more than 3 million people representing many socio-economic, ethnic and faith groups and a fantastic variety of cultures and traditions.



We have enormous opportunities for mission and service and considerable challenges to face and resolve as we continue to deal with the local, national and global challenges that have a direct impact on our parish churches, schools, chaplaincies and the communities we serve.

It is within this context and following a period of listening and discernment that started when I became Bishop of Chelmsford in 2021, that we set out a future direction of travel as a Diocese with a focus on [travelling well together](https://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/travelling-well-together): Our purpose is to love God and to love our neighbour; to worship faithfully and empowered by the Holy Spirit, witness to the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ as we serve the extraordinarily diverse array of local communities in Essex and East London.

Our approach is to enable and empower parishes and worshipping communities to discern how they are to be God's people in their own very different local contexts and as part of one diocesan family. Underpinning that approach is an invitation to a way of being articulated by shared diocesan values which might shape how we travel together, support each other and provide mutual accountability.

Since I became Bishop of Chelmsford, I have witnessed people's great warmth and I have seen first-hand, the wonderful things going on in our parishes and schools. Any new priest joining us in the Diocese of Chelmsford does so at a time of challenge, a time of change and most significantly a time of hope for our Church in this most diverse and vibrant of dioceses.

+Guli

Bishop of Chelmsford

Find out more about our Diocesan Direction of Travel and Values:



www.chelmsford.anglican.org/travelling-well-together

Message from the Chelmsford Methodist Circuit

The Chelmsford Methodist Circuit is involved in five different Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEP's) in the mid Essex region. We celebrate and share in God's mission by working with the Anglican, Baptist, Roman Catholic and United Reformed churches. St Augustine's is a particularly unique collaboration, involving not only the 'Single Congregation' LEP of Anglican's, Methodist and United Reformed traditions worshipping in a united way every week, but also sharing the premises with the Roman Catholic congregation.

St Augustine's has developed an important ministry expressed in the desire to be inclusive of all and supportive of difference. As Methodists, and alongside our URC friends, we welcome the continuing opportunity to represent the Free Church in partnership with the parish community. We are honoured to support the mission through monthly communions and occasional preaching services. Members of our Circuit team have been glad to continue to develop links with the school and representatives from the Circuit attend Church Councils.

Nearly all traditional denominations are going through a period of considerable re-organisation at the moment. This is true for Methodism as it is for all the other churches involved in the LEP. We take great comfort from the fact that we do not face these challenges alone, and pray that our fellowship together will strengthen us for the future work and mission which the Spirit guides us towards. We look forward to continuing this important work .

Message from Headteacher Bishops School

Our school is opposite the church and the school community comes to worship in church on Tuesday morning. Uniquely in Essex we are a joint CofE and RC primary school, and this ecumenical approach is a great gift to us. We have over 430 pupils and 90 staff and would love a priest who wants to be involved in the school's life and worship at every level. We welcome families of all faiths and none, and want our pupils to grow into happy, thoughtful, serving and gifted citizens - without prejudice or fear.

Our motto is '*Live Fully, Laugh Often, Learn Deeply, Love as God Loves You and Let Your Light Shine!*' and we are looking forward to welcoming a new priest into our school community.

Greg Waters, Headteacher

Message from the URC Chelmsford and South West Essex Mission Partnership

The United Reformed Church in Eastern Synod has always enjoyed working alongside a wide variety of denominations. In recent years the synod has moved towards a mission partnership structure, designed specifically to better support our Local Ecumenical Partnerships and to strengthen the shared work we do across our region. Eastern Synod stretches across Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, and parts of Hertfordshire. Within this broad landscape, the Chelmsford and South West Essex Mission Partnership covers a distinct patch, stretching from Chelmsford through Basildon down to Grays.

St Augustine's is a particularly unique collaboration within our partnership. It is a Single Congregation LEP where Anglican, Methodist, and United Reformed traditions worship together each week, while also sharing the building with the Roman Catholic congregation.

St Augustine's has developed a vital ministry shaped by a deep desire to include everyone and to support those who might feel different or overlooked. We are honoured to support the mission through occasional services and meetings. Revd Jo Clare-Young and Revd Gillian Thomson serve the Mission Partnership, and Jo is the primary link to St Augustine's. We pray that the right person feels called to this ministry and look forward to working with them.

In conclusion

Thank you for your interest in St Augustine of Canterbury Church and in the area of North Springfield. We hope that you have some sense of who we are and the journey we are on along with the possibilities and opportunities that there are for ministry here.

There is more information on our church website: <https://staugustinespringfield.org.uk/> and our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/StAugustinesNS>

If you are exploring your future ministry then we pray that God will lead you to the place where he wants you to serve. If you feel that might be here, then we hope you will apply.

With very best wishes