



Parish Profile for the  
Post of Associate Priest  
in The Theydon Parishes:  
St Mary the Virgin  
Theydon Bois,  
All Saints  
Theydon Garnon,



and the Parish of  
St Michael's  
Theydon Mount  
with St Mary's  
Stapleford Tawney



The Church of England  
in Essex and East London  
Diocese of Chelmsford



## THE DIOCESE: A MESSAGE FROM BISHOP GULI



Covering Essex and East London, Chelmsford is one of the largest, most diverse and exciting 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 long-term implications of the COVID-19 pandemic and global challenges that have a direct impact on our parish churches and the communities we serve.

My sense is that the whole Church of God is in a liminal season when we cannot clearly see the future and so don't quite know what it will look like. But we know that the Church has faced profound challenges in the past and as we look to the future we do so with faith that when we open ourselves up to being changed and transformed, we are best placed to serve God and God's people.

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 have begun to articulate our 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 our 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. 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 exciting of dioceses.

+Guli

**Bishop of Chelmsford**

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



[www.chelmsford.anglican.org/travelling-well-together](https://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/travelling-well-together)

# Overview of Parishes and Clergy Profile

## Introduction

The Theydon Parishes are seeking a new Associate Priest to join our Joint Benefice of St Mary the Virgin Theydon Bois, All Saints Theydon Garnon, and the parish of St Michael's Theydon Mount and St Mary the Virgin Stapleford Tawney. In short:

- one Benefice,
- three Parishes,
- three congregations,
- four worship centres.

We are situated in the Deanery of Epping Forest & Ongar, in the south western part of the county of Essex.



The Theydon Parishes covers a mixture of rural and suburbia. Our parishes all have individual characteristics and personalities, and we have been growing closer together and supporting one another in becoming the churches God is forming us to be.

Theydon Bois is a large village with great opportunity for mission on our doorstep. The parish of Theydon Garnon is semi-rural with the main residential area within part of the neighbouring town of Epping, which requires more creative expressions of mission. Theydon Mount and Stapleford Tawney are both unique and rural, and provide scope for agricultural mission.

Our new Incumbent joined us in 2025, and we are excited by what lies ahead and hope to build on the good work already being undertaken. We are three active parishes, and are eager to grow in faith, grow in number, and grow in mission.

We would call our service style 'central traditional' that provide the opportunity to deliver a range of styles of worship from the Book of Common Prayer to All Age Worship.

## Core Values

Our core values are: Faith, Love and Community.

We seek to live these values by welcoming all, caring, and teaching so that we may change lives through sharing the love of God in Christ.

## Overall Aims

The overall future aims for The Theydon Parishes can be summarised as follows:

- **Discipleship:** Encourage the growth of faith so people want to be disciples and not just churchgoers.
- **Evangelism:** Develop our ability to pass on our faith to all in the community.
- **Life:** Grow our relationship with all elements of community life so that the church is seen to be relevant and important and serving the whole community.
- **Care:** Develop our pastoral support and extend care and companionship to our elders in the community.
- **Mission:** Growing our engagement of children, young people and young families (both within and outside of the local Schools and Uniformed Groups).

To achieve these aims we must continue to bring our parishes and congregations together to work harmoniously.

## Characteristics Required

We are seeking someone who is willing to work collaboratively with the Incumbent across The Theydon Parishes, yet there will be an opportunity to lead one of our Overall Aims

We are praying for a candidate who will display the following characteristics:

- An inspirational and community-spirited leader who can uphold church traditions whilst also forward thinking and mission focused.
- A reflective leader who can motivate staff and volunteers, and encourage lay led activities to flourish.
- An inclusive and welcoming person who is passionate about growing church for all ages.

- A collaborative leader who can work closely with the wider Ministry team and support the four churches and their individual worshipping patterns.
- A financially astute person who recognises the importance of sound financial stewardship and can be creative with income generation.
- Can use IT creatively and confidently, using office systems and has a good level of administration skills, while also being comfortable using the support offered by a Benefice Administrator.
- Dependent on your skills and experience, we would expect you to be able to lead at least one of our Overall Aims.

There is no stipend for this post but remuneration consists of the provision of the Theydon Garnon Vicarage (page 16). Council Tax, water bills, and reasonable working expenses will be paid.

The time commitment for this role is Sundays plus the equivalent of 2 days each week. We can be flexible in how these hours are arranged dependent on the specific responsibilities of the role.

## Services

(TB: St Mary's Theydon Bois, TG: All Saints Theydon Garnon, TM: St Michael's Theydon Mount, ST: St Mary's Stapleford Tawney)

|                  | Week 1                    | Week 2                         | Week 3                             | Week 4                    | Week 5  |
|------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| 8.00am TB        | HC (BCP)                  | HC (BCP)                       | HC (BCP)                           | HC (BCP)                  | HC (BCP)  |
| 8.00am TG        | HC (BCP)                  |                                |                                    |                           |   |
| 9.15am TG        | All Age Worship           | Parish Communion (CW)          | Parish Communion (CW)              | Parish Communion (CW)     | 10.00am<br>United Benefice Communion (CW)<br><br>Rotating around Churches |
| 10.30am TB       | All Age Worship           | Family Communion (CW)          | Family Communion (CW)              | Morning Worship (CW)      |   |
| 10.45am TM or ST | Holy Communion (CW) at ST | Service of the Word (CW) at TM | Holy Communion (CW) at ST          | Holy Communion (CW) at TM |   |
| 6.00pm TB        | Sung Communion (CW)       | Sung Evensong (BCP)            | Sung Evensong or Compline (BCP/CW) | Sung Evensong (BCP)       |   |
| 6.00pm TG        |                           |                                |                                    |                           | Sung Evensong (BCP)   |

### Current Regular weekday Services

Holy Communion on Tuesdays at 10.00am (TG); Morning Prayer on Wednesdays at 10.00am (TB) (Week 2: *M U Communion*) and on Zoom; Holy Communion on Thursdays at 12.00 noon (TB).

## Support

The new Associate Priest can expect strong support from the Incumbent and the people of The Theydon Parishes in terms of:

- Enthusiasm - the three congregations are brimming with a variety of skills that can be shared across the group of churches.
- Dedication - the respective congregations are committed members of the church family and can be relied upon for a long-term commitment.
- Lay Ministry - there is a committed and experienced team of two Licensed Lay Ministers and three Authorised Local Preachers already in place, in addition to Junior Church leaders, Choir leaders, Eucharist Assistants, Readers, Intercessors, and Vergers who ensure that a full range of worship is provided to the congregations across the four churches.
- Teamwork - the churchwarden team representing the four churches are experienced and work cohesively together across the Benefice, complemented by three fully functioning Parochial Church Councils.



# St Mary's Church, Theydon Bois

## Introduction

St Mary's is a flourishing church family. We hold a variety of services that meet a wide spectrum of needs and are able to call on many different talents, both spiritual and practical, amongst the worshippers. We enjoy lovely church buildings and grounds as well as a nearby church hall, which together provide ample space for every kind of church activity.



## Church Membership

Number on electoral roll: 152. with the average attendance at services being:

- Sunday 8.00am - 20,
- Sunday 10.30am - 50, plus 10 children,
- Sunday 6.00pm - 15,
- Wednesday 10.00am - 20 including Zoom
- Thursday 12 noon - 10.

In 2025 there were:

- 1 baptism,
- 1 wedding,
- 12 funerals.

We have a good mix of young families, adults, and elders within our congregation; most of whom either live in the village of very close by. Many of the elders have worshipped at St Mary's for a large part of their lives and continue to be actively involved. The only clear age gap is the range from the mid-teens to the twenties, yet there are a lot of young families within the village.

## Lay Participation

We have at St Mary's Church:

- 1 Licensed Lay Minister
- 2 Authorised Local Preachers

- 12 Eucharistic Assistants
- 2 Churchwardens
- 2 Deputy Churchwardens
- 1 Verger
- 6 Sidespeople
- 6 who lead intercessions

We would like to continue to encourage more people to offer their gifts and talents for the work of St Mary's, however large or small, spiritual or practical.

The PCC meets a minimum of four times a year.

## Mission

We have a good relationship with our local Schools.

Theydon Bois Primary School hold their Harvest Festival and other services within St Mary's whilst also inviting the Incumbent to assemblies and other events.

Our local secondary school, Davenant Foundation School, is oversubscribed. A main criterion for admission is attendance at a church for five years which draws people to our church. This provides an opportunity to reach out to young families.

There is a branch of the Mothers' Union attached to St Mary's Church which is involved in many activities from spiritual to practical including leading intercessions. An afternoon meeting with various speakers is held each month and on the second Wednesday of the month members are invited to the 10am Holy Communion Service.

There is a weekly Pram Group in the church hall, which is run by volunteers as is well attended.

There are full and thriving Uniformed Groups in Theydon Bois. The units are not sponsored but closely linked to the Church and some of the leaders are members of the congregation. The guiding groups are encouraged to attend Church Parade on Harvest Sunday, and parade at the St George's Day and Remembrance Sunday services held at St Mary's.

We are keen to develop a youth group with opportunities for socials and discipleship. This goes hand in hand with a drive to hold on to members of our Junior Church as they approach their mid-teens.

## Teaching

### *Groups for children and young people*

The Junior Church meets twice a month during the 10.30am Sunday services during term time with volunteers leading and helping on a rota basis. All leaders are safer recruited in accordance with Diocesan policy.

### *Adult Groups*

We have two flourishing home groups, and our Incumbent recently introduced a Benefice-wide opportunity for regular discipleship groups (at least 4 a year). This is considered an important area for development so that we can grow together in our love of God and we are better able to share our faith with others in the community. Additionally some members of St Mary's are attending the Course in Christian Studies, and we are eager to encourage more people to engage in further discipleship.

## Music in Worship

The robed choir sings at most 10.30am and 6pm services, as well as other special services such as festivals and weddings. They help to support the worship by providing a strong lead for the congregational hymns, communion music, canticles and psalms. They also regularly sing anthems selected for the theme of the service or season.



The choir, which is affiliated to the Royal School of Church Music, is four part (SATB). Practices are held on Thursday evenings. We are eager to re-start our children's choir again. The church does not have a permanent organist, but is ably supported by a rota of regular organists.

The Worship Group consists of a small

group of musicians who play guitars, keyboard and sing to lead the worship at the monthly All Age Worship Service.

## Building

The original parish church, dating back to the 13th century, was on the Abridge Road next to Theydon Hall. The present building was consecrated in 1851, the architect being Sidney Smirke, perhaps best known for his design of the Reading Room at the British Museum. Among the hatchments in the main body of the church there is one bearing the arms of King James I, one of only four in the country. The three bells, along with several memorials, were transferred from the 13th century church.



The ground on which the church stands is clay. Historically movement over the years caused substantial subsidence and cracking, especially in the north and west walls. These have now been totally underpinned, along with the chancel arch, and the nave roof has been anchored with metal ties.

In 2003 the Parish Centre was opened with three multi-purpose rooms and a dedicated clergy vestry. This has provided excellent accommodation for the clergy, the choir, and the Junior Church. The kitchen facility enables us to provide much appreciated refreshments after services. The centre is used for various meetings and seminars both by St Mary's and also by visiting clergy teams and church groups.

Thanks to the generosity of several benefactors much work has been possible to the fabric of the church. The copper cladding of the spire has been replaced and the main roof re-tiled over its full length, together with new

coping stones at the East and West ends of the church.

## Churchyard

During the course of most years there are burials in the churchyard and cremated ashes burials in the Garden of Remembrance.



We have one of the finest churchyards in Essex and of special note are several superb oak trees of considerable age. The Parish Council makes an annual grant towards its maintenance, including care of the War Memorial.

The Churchyard Working Party keeps the main area in good condition, although we need to increase our volunteers. We have won awards for the best kept churchyard.

## Church Hall

The separate church hall is situated in Coppice Row, about 200 metres from the church buildings, and was constructed in 1946 out of two RAF Nissen huts.



The hall is financially self-sufficient and a valued community resource used for a

diverse range activities, including the weekly Uniformed Groups, the Community Cuppa and Repair Café, as well as being hired out for art, dance and fitness classes and for parties and celebrations.

We also host Church events in this hall, including soup lunches, church fairs and the weekly pram group for pre-school children and their carers.

We need to consider the long-term sustainability of the building, which will require a significant fundraising project.

## Links with other Churches and the Community

Annual services such as Remembrance Sunday and Nine Lessons and Carols are well attended. The church is packed for the three Christingle services on Christmas Eve.

We provide joint services work with the local Baptist Church on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday walk of witness.

Ongoing witness to the residents of Theydon Bois is mainly handled through pages in the quarterly local Village News magazine, and the Incumbent attending community events (e.g. prayers for the lighting of the Christmas Tree).

## Mission

As a church we aim to show the love of God revealed through Christ to the village, the country and the wider world through fundraising for world mission and participation in mission-focused activities locally.

Our Mission Committee is committed to raising awareness of world mission among church members, and is seeking to consider how St Mary's can embrace the Five Marks of Mission in the future. Soup lunches are held during Lent, Harvest and November, raising funds for the mission charities we support, and enabling us to reach out into the village community. Our annual *Bags for Life* initiative provides bags to the congregation to fill with goods for The Manna Centre for the homeless in London Bridge, the Mission to Seafarers and Teams4U. We support organisations and people that show God's love in practical ways, as well as those whose aim is to spread the Christian message.

St Mary's is an enthusiastic supporter of Christian Aid Week, working together with the Baptist Church and families from the



Catholic Church who are resident in the village.

Our packed Christingle Services are an opportunity both to welcome many local families to church and to raise funds for The Children's Society.

The Incumbent is Chair of the United Charities, which seeks to provide small financial aid to people in need from the village.

## Events

We have an active events committee which meets three times a year to organise various social activities. The aim of these is to provide opportunities for fun and fellowship amongst the family of St. Mary's, to embrace the wider community and also to raise much needed funds.



We aim to have a variety of events spread over the year, including our popular quiz and Christmas fayre.

## Finance

Our Parish Share is calculated as a percentage of the overall Benefice Share, for which we carry the majority of the responsibility. We meet the Parish Share in full.

We have a dedicated Stewardship Committee and an Events Committee that seek to generate income, but we recognise that more could be done.

## Theydon Bois - wider community

Since the railway came to Theydon Bois in 1865 there has been a steady increase in the size and population of the village and many residents travel to work in London. The

original railway became part of the underground network's Central Line in 1949 which made London even more easily accessible.

In spite of this, the parish retains a number of rural features being surrounded by green belt land and Epping Forest. The village green is an attractive centre and there are a range of shops and a primary school. To preserve the character of the village the Theydon Bois & District Rural Preservation Society was founded in 1943 - (for more on the Society see: <https://tbruralpres.org.uk/>).

A Montessori Nursery is held in the village hall and the Theydon pre-school meets in the Scout Hall. The popular local primary school is very much part of the village. The majority of the children who attend Junior Church also attend Theydon Primary.

In addition several parishioners are involved with the primary school as governors, members of the PTA and volunteers. Many of the children from St Mary's and the primary school go on to Davenant Foundation School, the local secondary.

The village is very keen to keep its local shops open. There is a Tesco Express which houses the Post Office, two highly regarded butchers, a popular baker, hairdressers, a newsagent, pharmacy, two estate agents and several other shops. Additionally there are two pubs in the village serving food as well as Italian, Turkish, seafood and two In-



dian restaurants, a bagel café and a fish and chips takeaway.

The village has an active Parish Council with eleven councillors. The council runs many activities including a village Christmas market. It also assists financially with the maintenance of the churchyard. The village also has an excellent village hall, run by the Village Association. More details of the village can be found at:

<https://theydonbois-pc.gov.uk/>



# All Saints' Church, Theydon Garnon

## Introduction

All Saints' Theydon Garnon is known to millions as it stands overlooking the junction of the M11 and M25. The church has been near to the main route to London for centuries as the old Roman road passes within a few hundred yards to the east of the building and the medieval road to London passes to the west.

## The History of the Parish

The Parish church of All Saints' Theydon Garnon dates back over 800 years. Throughout the whole of this time the building has been used as a place of worship as it is today. It was originally one of the two main Parishes of Epping with Epping Upland north of the High Street in Epping and Theydon Garnon being south of the High Street. In 1890 the Parish of St John the Baptist, Epping was created which incorporated part of the ancient Parish of Theydon Garnon.

The present Theydon Garnon Parish comprises an area south of the Central Line in Epping together with a scattered rural community. The Parish has been through a number of changes through the past 40 years and has responded positively each time.

## Our Parish

In a parish intersected by the M25 and the M11, our church provides an oasis of calm, set as it is, in its rural setting. Key facts within our Parish are (figures from the 2001 census):

- The rural part of the parish consists of 48 households (130 people)
- Average of 2 cars per household in the rural part.
- There is no public transport in the rural part of the Parish.
- The bulk of the population however, lives in the southern part of Epping.
- It is estimated that there are in excess of 2,500 people living in this part of the Parish.
- There are no significant poverty or diversity issues.

There is a private school in the Parish known as Coopersale Hall School. There are two golf courses, a conference and wedding centre and country pubs all within the Parish.

The current electoral roll of the church's Parish has 51 members of which 17 (approximately 31%) live in the Parish and 38 live out of the Parish. When comparing the electoral roll to the Parish, the potential to increase our congregation is clear.

Though the electoral roll is small we try to reach out to every household within the Parish through the free distribution of our occasional Parish leaflets, especially when there are special events.

In 2025 there were:

- 1 baptism,
- 3 weddings,
- 4 funerals.

## The Church Building

The Church building is beautiful. It is an ancient building and is one of only three churches in Essex to have wooden columns. Built around 700 years ago, its history and bonds with the community were created long ago. Every corner of the church is steeped in history, its architecture telling the stories of its past.



In summer 2024 the roof of the nave and chancel was completely replaced to future proof the building for years to come. But this is also a church for today, its stillness providing a tranquil place of worship in today's hectic world.

## The Gatehouse

There is a church hall, known as the Gatehouse, was completed in 2000 and won an award for its design.

This generates some income from lettings, including the local elections and a weekly art group, and is used after church services for refreshments.



It is also used for other church activities including the Children's church and Brownies.

## The Churchyard

The open churchyard extends to about 4½ acres and is kept neat and tidy by the efforts of a small group of parishioners. It is a tranquil place where people often come to sit and think, away from the bustle of life. The grounds provide a wonderful setting to the ancient church. The leader of the Churchyard Working Group is also the dedicated Tree Officer and available to provide advice to other Parishes.

We have a reputation as a "special place to visit". Thousands of people have visited us, particularly for our Hog Roasts and many walkers and visitors pass through our well maintained churchyard. In June 2009 we registered with 'Small Pilgrim Places' hoping



that this will attract new visitors. We have also created a Forest Church area in our churchyard. The north porch has been converted into a wayside chapel for people tending graves and visiting the churchyard.

## Church Services

We use a blend of Common Worship and Book of Common Prayer. Our style of worship is a key attraction for many in the congregation and one of the reasons why so many on our electoral roll come from outside our Parish. The Book of Common Prayer is used for the monthly 8 o'clock Communion and Evensong/Matins. Hymns Old and New are used with organ accompaniment to the hymns and Traditional Anglican is the style used for the monthly Sung Evensong.

Special services throughout the year can see the church bursting at the seams, including Harvest, Christingle, Carols by Candlelight, Mothering Sunday and Remembrance Sunday. Plus, the local Brownie group attend 2-3 church parade services during the year which swell the congregation.

All these are very popular services which entice our less regular visitors. For example, our Harvest service attracted 53 adults and 13 children and a similar number attended our Remembrance Day Service. There were 61 people at the Easter Service and over 100 attended our Christmas Carol Service. Aside from these special services, the average attendance is approximately 35, but there is



considerable potential to increase that number through mission. We have the opportunity, and are constantly looking at ways to grow our congregation by encouraging our irregular visitors to join us more frequently by using the touch points that we have in people's lives.

Discipleship groups have been organised on a Benefice basis. Theydon Garnon has also been used as a venue for church Quiet Days.

Although small, our congregation is participative in the life of the church. Aside



from the contributions mentioned below, members of the congregation support the services with Eucharist Assistants, Readers, Intercessors, a Children's Church Leader, and an Authorised Local Preacher. We have a particularly successful lay led family service once a month.

As a Parish we have been successful in nurturing leaders of worship. For example, two previous readers are now ordained and have their own parishes.

We have a dedicated choir, our own bell ringers, a social committee, churchyard working group and fabric working group.



We are a committed, participative congregation with a desire to share this beautiful church with others. We love each other dearly and we would like new members to join our fellowship. We know with God's help we have the potential to achieve that. We are particularly welcoming to our wedding couples who we hope will renew their long term commitment to faith during their qualifying period and following their wedding ceremony.

## Children's Group

Our Children's Group meets twice a month and is a small group spanning an age range of 3 to 14 years old. Although the group is small and diverse in age, they learn well together as a group under the guidance of our Children's Church Leader, assisted by her helpers. They occasionally lead the prayers or lead part of the family service. They prepare a Christmas Tree or Crib Scene for St. John's Christmas Tree Festival each year and an Easter Garden.

## Work with other Parishes

Our relationship with the other parishes in our United Benefice have continued to grow as we have found ways to support each other. The Churchwardens meet regularly, along with the Treasurers, and we share a Parish Safeguarding Officer between Theydon Garnon and the parish of Stapleford Tawney with Theydon Mount.

We are committed to paying all clergy expenses in full in a shared formula with the other parishes, and to offer appropriate ministry assistance where required.



## Finance

Our Parish Share is calculated as a percentage of the overall Benefice Share. We meet the Parish Share in full.

We rely, however, on the Hog Roast and other fundraising events to top up the accounts as the regular giving is insufficient for the total expenditure each year. We recognise that this is an area that needs to be addressed. During 2023/24 we raised £200,000 to fund the reroofing of the church building.

## Development

The Church has in recent history completed the building of a new gatehouse, installed new central heating, upgraded the sound system, funded floodlighting for the outside of the church, restored the William Eyre Archer memorial and refurbished the



interior of the Church for the eradication of dry rot.

In 2008 we totally refurbished the bells and belfry, and on All Saints' Day 2009 the bells were dedicated. The bells are rung for weddings and funerals, and ringing practice is held every Wednesday.

## Our Charitable Giving

On the charitable side, the Parish has links with the Children's Society, Friends of Essex Churches, The Manna Society, CMS, toys for the Harlow Social Services Department and Christian Aid.



# St Michael's, Theydon Mount with St Mary's, Stapleford Tawney

**St Michael's, Theydon Mount**



The present building dates from 1614; there was a much older church on the site dating from the 13th century, which burnt down, probably struck by lightning. It adjoins Hill Hall, and has always had a close connection with it. Its construction was mostly paid for by Sir William Smith, nephew of Sir Thomas Smith, Chancellor to Elizabeth I. There are a number of fine tombs, monuments and hatchments to the Smyth family in the building which, along with its many original 17<sup>th</sup> century features, led to its Grade I listing. The church seats about 80 and has modern electric heating.

## The Services

Since as far back as 1755 St Michael's and St Mary's have shared the same rector, but operating as separate churches. The two parishes merged in 1988 forming a joint PCC and electoral roll, and since mid-2014 the same congregation worships alternate weeks at the two churches. There is a regular robed choir, a much-cherished aspect of worship at both churches. We hold as many special all-inclusive services as we can think of, to encourage wider attendance. These include outdoor Lambing and Pets services in spring and summer, a farmer-supported Harvest Festival, a Christingle service at Candlemas, and a Toy service in early December, as well as the usual major festivals. The Remembrance service at Mount and the symbol-based Good Friday service at Tawney are both especially moving.

One of our congregation is a Licensed Lay Minister, who leads a monthly Service of

**St Mary's, Stapleford Tawney**



St. Mary's probably dates from the 13<sup>th</sup> century, with important restoration work having been carried out in 1862. There is seating for about 100 people plus choir stalls. The church has an integral parish room with kitchen and toilet facilities, added in 1999. Big enough for up to 30 people, it is ideal for meetings, Lent groups and Parish Lunches, as well as post-service refreshments. It enables us to hold fund-raising talks and musical events more comfortably. The splendid 1873 Willis organ is played at organ recitals as well as for worship.

the Word, and the Benefice Ministry Team offer support when needed.

## The People

There are 39 people on the electoral roll. Only ten of these are actually resident in Tawney or Mount, out of a total population of about 270. The rest have been drawn to the churches for other reasons. Like many rural parishes with scattered populations and no school, we find it difficult to attract more children and young people yet we are eager to do so.

Although we are in a country location, many of our congregation are from more professional backgrounds, and between them have a wide range of skills and knowledge. Our congregations are comfortable with a middle-of-the-road style of worship, but we are flexible and willing to try new approaches. We are good at working as a team, and can be actively self-sufficient, with a can-do attitude to ideas and events.



We are fortunate to have wider involvement in the church than just the congregation. A useful neighbourhood WhatsApp group has led to churchyard working parties by local residents, as well as increasing awareness of church events and activities. Tawney church is always open (unmanned) throughout the day, and is a popular stopping-point for walkers, cyclists and general visitors. Because of its isolated location, Mount church has to be kept locked, but is regularly visited by historical and architectural groups, including those on English Heritage tours of Hill Hall. As a small congregation, it is easy to spot and welcome newcomers, and get to know them better during refreshments after services.

## Pastoral Care

As a close-knit congregation, we are all aware and actively involved in offering support to those who need it. We have recently started a monthly Cuppa & Craft which aims to bring together conversation, creativity, and community.

## Events and Fundraising

Regular events are held for both fundraising and social purposes, and to raise the church profile locally. Our Parish Lunch is always well received by the local community.

## Financial

Our Parish Share is calculated as a percentage of the overall Benefice Share. We meet the Parish Share in full. However, this is becoming increasingly difficult and we rely on a small, yet committed group of givers.

Whenever we've had a major project (e.g. re-roofing, refurbishing hatchments) the congregation and local residents have been very generous in their support.

## Charitable Giving

We recognise that this is an important part of our Christian calling. We support the Manna Centre, Harlow Social Services, Little Haven Children's Hospice and the Children's Society.

## Maintenance

With two listed churches in one small parish, this is an ongoing challenge. The east and west windows at Mount were restored in 2007 and 2010. The roof of Tawney church was re-tiled in 2012 and 2014, and the hatchments at Mount were refurbished in 2020 and 2021. Routine maintenance and repairs are carried out as needed.

The two churchyards are mown by a supportive local contractor, and extra work is done by our neighbourhood group.

## The Future

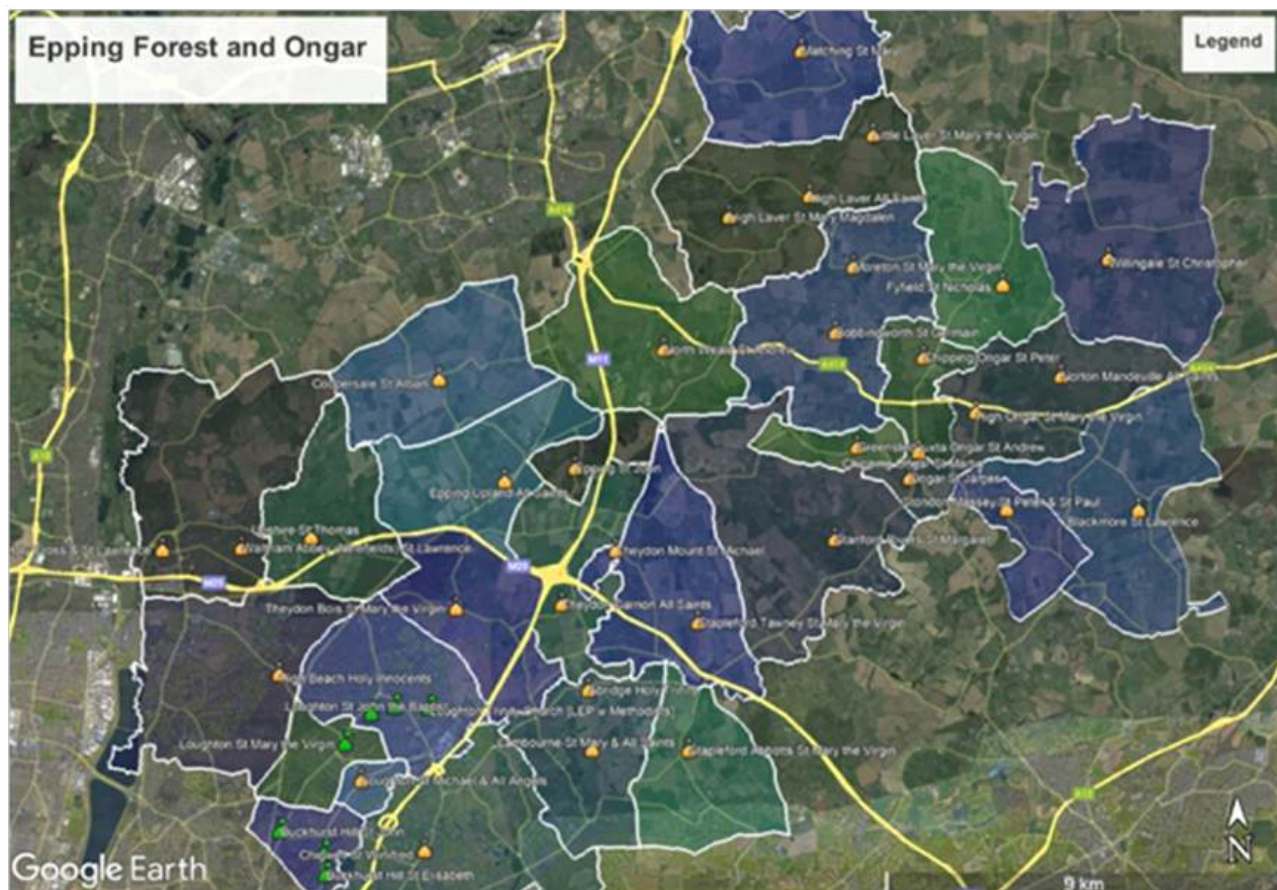
The unification of our parish with Theydon Bois and Theydon Garnon is still evolving, but we have made good progress and the Churchwardens for the Benefice meet together regularly. We hope to develop even closer ties with our sister churches.





## The Deanery of Epping Forest and Ongar

The majority of the Deanery is located within the area covered by Epping Forest District Council and the parishes within the Deanery reflect the diversity of the local area, some being deeply rural others far more urban. The parishes of The Theydon Parishes can be found surrounding the junction of the M25 and M11.



The Deanery is organised into three Mission and Ministry Units, each discerning together their own strategic direction for mission.

The Theydon Parishes are part of the Epping Forest North Unit, which also includes the parish of St John's Loughton and the parishes that make up the Epping District and Waltham Abbey Team Ministries. The clergy of the unit meet weekly to say Morning Prayer together and enjoy fellowship and friendship with one another in each of the ministry contexts of the Unit.

There are 24 clergy in the Deanery serving in a range of posts, including stipendiary clergy, house for duty posts and self-supporting ministers alongside a number of lay ministers and authorised local preachers and authorised pastoral assistants..



Deanery synod meets two or three times a year in the evening, and the Chapter meeting bimonthly over lunchtime, varying the day of the week to maximise the opportunity for colleagues to attend, the venues for both meetings rotating around the Deanery with worship in the tradition of the hosting church. The Deanery looks forward to welcoming a new colleague.

Rev John Fry - Area Dean of Epping Forest and Ongar

## **The Vicarage, Fiddlers Hamlet, Epping, Essex CM16 7PQ**

The Vicarage is situated in a small rural community known as Fiddlers Hamlet which is about one mile South East of the town of Epping, and within the parish of All Saints' Theydon Garnon.



It is a large four bedroom detached house with a separate garage set in a large garden overlooking fields.

The property has full central heating, double glazing, a large lounge, separate dining room, large kitchen and a down stairs office and toilet. Upstairs there is a family bathroom and the main bedroom has washing facilities. The property has a full alarm system fitted and the occupant/s can make use of an adjoining paddock should they wish. The décor is due for refurbishment and account will be taken of any successful candidate's wishes.

The Central Line Underground Station of Epping is within easy access as is the town itself with its numerous shops, cafes, restaurants and weekly market.

### ***Details of Room sizes - Ground Floor***

Lounge: 18'6'' x 13'6'' two double radiators

Office: 10'6'' x 11'6'' one double radiator

Dining Room: 15'6'' x 11'6'' one double radiator

Kitchen: 15' x 10'6'' one double radiator

Large hallway with stairs to first floor. Down stairs toilet adjacent to kitchen and back door.

### ***1st Floor***

Bedroom 1: 18'6'' x 13'6'' radiator

Bedroom 2: 19' x 10'6'' radiator

Bedroom 3: 14' x 11'6'' radiator

Bedroom 4: 10'6'' x 8'6'' radiator

Large family bathroom, airing cupboard and spacious landing.

