

# East Hanningfield, South Woodham Ferrers, and Woodham Ferrers with Bicknacre

## THE HILL AND VALE CHURCHES



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**Christingle at East Hanningfield**



## SOME WORDS FROM THE BISHOP



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:

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



## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for reading this profile. The Hill and Vale Churches are four congregations to the south-east of Chelmsford, close to the old “Salt Path” (now the B1418), and we are praying for you, our next Priest in Charge.

The main part of this document is the four mini-profiles, written by our four churches individually. But before you get to the mini-profiles, we wanted to draw together some of the themes that emerged when we asked our members what they “most deeply longed for” (we received 77 responses in all). This has helped us understand some of the qualities and skills we are looking for in you, our next Priest in Charge, but also some of the things we can offer you.

One clarification: East Hanningfield is not yet officially part of the Hill and Vale Churches. Rev Terry Brown is presently Incumbent of Sandon and East Hanningfield, but will retire in the summer of 2024, and it is planned that East Hanningfield will be formally joined to the other parishes in our cluster then.

### Diversity

Sometimes, clusters of parishes will have a joint unique selling point (USP) that sums them up – a common spirituality, a common mission, a common worship style or a common demographic. We do not. We hope this does not discourage you. We see our diversity as a strength. We might even say that our diversity *is* our USP. One member put it like this: “We long that each church discovers its own identity and mission without pretending we’re the same”. We are praying for a Priest in Charge

**\*who will enjoy and celebrate our diversity.**

We can offer church communities who promise to be positive, generous and forgiving. We will support you, as you support us.

A St Mary’s member suggested the ‘nickname’ of Hill and Vale Churches in summer 2023, partly to refer to this diversity, and at a joint service on July 30 we voted to adopt it.



### Joy

When we asked members what they were longing for, words like “joy” and “happiness” came up surprisingly frequently. We think it’s important that we, God’s people, are joyful – one participant said “we should feel better when we leave church than when we came”. But we also long to spread the joy – “we long to have a joy and hope in us that leads people to ask us where it came from”. We are praying for a Priest in Charge

**\*who is close to God and able to inspire others with joy.**

We can offer a community that understands that everyone has off days and no one is perfect. We have a sense of humour, and can be considerate, acknowledging the workload. We want you, our new Priest in Charge, to know you are valued as an individual with your own needs and aspirations and we will support you and act for your joy.



## Accompanying us – especially the sorrowful



We are looking for a Priest in Charge who can be with us. We place particular importance on *being with* those at their lowest point – the housebound, the isolated, the bereaved. We would love there to be a pastoral care team across the four churches, and do not believe pastoral care is the responsibility of the clergy alone. We are praying for a Priest in Charge

- \*who will listen calmly and help us discern
- \*who will *be with* and encourage the struggling, and build pastoral care structures.

We can offer a warm welcome, team members for a pastoral care team, an understanding that your responsibilities need to be shared with us, and our support for you, when you need *us* to be with *you*.

In **1 Kings 20:23, 28** we learn that God is **the God of the hills, and the God of the valleys**. He is God where we are happy and secure, and God when we are less cheerful and less confident. And as Hill and Vale Churches **we want to be *both* places of joy, *and* communities that accompany the sorrowful.**

## Worship that transforms us



God is the most interesting thing about us, and we care about worship and preaching that change us. We are praying for a Priest in Charge

- \*who preaches and lives the Gospel of the love of Jesus in ways that transform us.
- \*who can lead worship in a variety of different church traditions with “presence,” while remaining approachable.

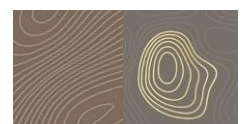
We can offer our prayers and support for you – and we hope you will be encouraged by hearing other ministers in the Hill and Vale Churches preach. We believe that we are called not to be communities gathered around one Minister, but ministering communities.



**St Andrew's, Bicknacre**



**Holy Trinity, South Woodham Ferrers**



## Community engagement, especially with schools



This profile often focuses on Sunday worship. But we understand that Sundays are only one day of your week, and will support you as you engage with the residents, shop-keepers, businesses and civil society of our area. In particular, there are nine schools in the four communities, including three church schools, and we hope you see this as a good thing. We are praying for a Priest in Charge

**\*who has energy for community engagement, especially with schools**

We can offer our support and enthusiasm, and our networks of relationships with people from multiple denominations and community organisations.

In **Matthew 9:28-43** we read of Jesus' Transfiguration at the top of a hill; some of his disciples were so lost in wonder, love and praise they forgot where they were. But meanwhile, in the valley, other disciples were attempting, and failing, to help a distressed family. The Hill and Vale Churches **care both about worship and about our communities**, and see our worship (and the preaching we hear) as gathering us and transforming us so we can be sent out. All this – along with enjoying our diversity, and longing to be marked by joy and to be with the sorrowful – is implied by our name.



## Church growth/evangelism, especially with younger generations

When we asked our members to write on post-it notes what they most longed for, more wrote something about this area than any other. But we have to be very honest and tell you that we have not been very effective, and need your help. We are particularly aware that we need to engage younger generations with church life – and those younger generations include the 40-50s as well as the under 40s, and children and young people. We are praying for a Priest in Charge

**\*who can communicate with younger generations.**

**\*who can enable church members to help people find faith.**

We can offer our prayers, listening ears, willingness to volunteer, and our knowledge of our communities.



## Our present pattern of services

During the vacancy our services have largely been led by

\*our four authorised local preachers,

\*an ordinand and a potential ordinand,

\*other lay people,

\*Rev Andy Griffiths<sup>1</sup> (a diocesan employee for whom St Andrew's Bicknacre is his 'home church')

\*Rev Suzy Edmundson (a retired priest) and

\*Rev Terry Brown (Rector of Sandon and Priest in Charge of East Hanningfield, who retires in the summer of 2024).

**We are not looking for a Priest in Charge who will replace our ministry teams, but for someone who will join them and lead them.** So we are looking for a Priest in Charge

**\*who will encourage and trust teams.**

	<b>East Hanningfield</b> (average 15-20 worshippers)	<b>South Woodham Ferrers</b> (average 15-25 worshippers)	<b>Woodham Ferrers</b> (average 10-15 worshippers)	<b>Bicknacre</b> (average 20-25 worshippers)
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month</b>	9am Holy Communion (30 mins BCP)	11.15am Service with Methodists	11.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month</b>	10am Morning Worship with Prayer for Healing	10am Morning Worship	11.30am Morning Prayer	9.30am Morning Worship
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month</b>	10am Holy Communion	10am Holy Communion	11.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Morning Worship
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month</b>	10am Morning Worship	10am Morning Worship	11.30am Morning Prayer	9.30am Morning Worship
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month</b>	10am Choral Mattins (BCP)	Joint service (rotates around the three churches)		

We realise of course that we will need to be flexible. We aspire to be low-maintenance, and our buildings (as far as we can tell) will not need any substantial work in the foreseeable future.

## VIDEOS

You can see videos of our church buildings at <https://www.wfandbchurch.org/videos> and [https://youtu.be/qTeG\\_YUTwo0](https://youtu.be/qTeG_YUTwo0).

<sup>1</sup> Note that after the vacancy Rev Andy Griffiths is likely to be redeployed within the Area, thus being less available than at present.



## MINI-PROFILE: EAST HANNINGFIELD (ALL SAINTS)



### Mission Statement

The Parish Vision is to fulfil God's call with our worship and to promote the pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical mission of the Church throughout our Parish including East Hanningfield Church of England Primary School.

The PCC dreams of a church building and Christian community

- ◆ as a visible hub of the community,
- ◆ with mission-minded leadership,
- ◆ fellowship of people of all ages,
- ◆ growing spiritually,
- ◆ with strong links to the church school.

Being realistic, in our current situation we seek inspiration and encouragement and would welcome the opportunity to work together with someone who:

- ◆ shares our vision,
- ◆ provides enthusiastic and good-humoured leadership
- ◆ is committed to the parish,
- ◆ is visible in our community, as far as time allows &
- ◆ has the skills & capacity needed to work with the school.

### The Parish

The Parish comprises the village of East Hanningfield and the surrounding area, which is almost entirely agricultural land. The village has a population of approx 1200. The PCC meets 6 times a year, has 6 elected members including the Chairman, one Churchwarden, Secretary, Treasurer and Deanery Synod Representative. There are no Committees; all matters are dealt with by the full PCC. In addition PCC and non-PCC members have responsibility for baptism preparation, church cleaning, book sales with coffee morning, and the organisation of both the annual Village Fete and Art Show. We also run an annual Scarecrow Competition.

### The Village

East Hanningfield is 6 miles south-east of Chelmsford. It is mentioned in the Domesday Book. The original All Saints' Church was built beside The Hall where the Saxon Chief lived when he converted to Christianity. About a mile from the centre of the village, sadly it was largely destroyed by fire in 1883, though a churchyard remains (closed to burials) with two public footpaths through it and the responsibility for the maintenance of this has been taken on by the local authority. (The Essex





Society for Family History in 1996 recorded the monumental inscriptions of both churchyards) The list of clergy dates back to 1248.

The present church was consecrated in 1885 and was listed as a Grade II building by English Heritage in 2012. It is situated on The Tye the traditional centre of the village; the layout of this part of East Hanningfield is largely unchanged as seen in John Walker's map of 1625, now in the Essex Record Office. However in the 1960s considerable expansion took place, including a substantial estate of local authority housing and a number of private developments. Most people work outside the village in local towns or London. Bus routes link with Chelmsford, Southend and Maldon.

In our village as well as the farming community, there is a light industrial estate, timber merchant, architects' practice, financial advice company and an Italian restaurant. The commercially-run post office & shop are located in the village hall (which is across the road from the church). It is modern with three separate rooms, outdoor play and sports facilities; these are well-equipped and well used and run by Hanna's Field Charity. We have a thriving Pre-School based in this hall.

As well as All Saints, there is a well-supported Bethel Evangelical Chapel. In recent years we have instigated joint carol-singing round the village with refreshments after.



**THE EAST WINDOW**

### **Current Situation**

The electoral roll has 40 members and we usually have 15 - 20 people attending a service. The Word of God is highly valued - the readings and the Gospel are normally read by members of the congregation.

The conundrum is that while many people who live in the village are very keen to support us when we fundraise or even directly ask for financial support (TRIO), they are not keen to attend church. In an effort to discover why this might be, a questionnaire was compiled some years ago to enable those on the church's electoral roll (45) and others (50) to express their views. 57% completed this. The questionnaire results showed there was significant support for the pattern of Sunday worship we now enjoy, ie one BCP and one Common Worship HC with other services non-Eucharistic. The village primary school comes into All Saints for a number of services during the year.

In recent years we have refurbished our bells, installed a new heating system and provided toilet facilities with a baby-changing table in a shed in our churchyard. We were proud to be the first church in Essex to install this type of eco-composting toilet. More recently we have



had asbestos removed from the boiler room, the organ blower box and from areas of pipework in the south chancel.

In 2022 there were 7 baptisms, 3 weddings, 1 blessing and 1 funeral in church. Two sets of ashes were buried in the designated Cremated Remains Area.

We have an established church website with photos, including drone footage with views of our well-maintained churchyard <https://easthanningfieldchurch.chessck.co.uk>

Our finances are currently in a healthy position; we continue to pay our Parish Share in full.

### **The future**

We have recently submitted a Faculty to install a recycled stained glass window in memory of Queen Elizabeth II. One of our existing stained glass windows commemorates the life of Queen Victoria.

As noted in our Mission Statement above, we wish to build on our relationship with the Village school. East Hanningfield Cof E (VC) Primary school is part of the Seven Spires Partnership which comprises a group of seven C of E schools, all closely located, sharing the same Christian visions and values. The number on roll at present is 122 and EYFS has a full intake for this year. We have two foundation governors, one from the PCC and one from the wider congregation.

As the school is only 100 metres away from the church, visits by the whole school to celebrate the major festivals of the church's year are easily achievable. Different classes regularly perform either a Christmas play or Nativity, or a carol service in the church to packed audiences of parents and relatives. Also on occasion children come over to the church to learn about its interior features. One of the aims stated in the School Development Plan for 2023-24 is 'to develop child-led collective worship' with, we hope, support and collaboration from the new incumbent.



## MINI-PROFILE: SOUTH WOODHAM FERRERS (HOLY TRINITY)

In Christ, loving and serving God's world.

### The Town and Parish

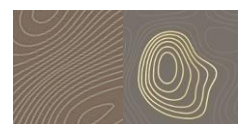
The attractive riverside county town of South Woodham Ferrers was developed out of an existing village in the mid-1970's and there is a new development planned for the North of the town. The town has a population of approximately 16,500. The majority of people reside in a mixture of owner occupied and social housing. The railway connects to Wickford with links to London, Liverpool Street and Southend and an hourly bus service to the City of Chelmsford. A significant number of residents commute to London, Southend, Chelmsford, and Basildon.

The town is set in an agricultural area, yet has good access to the M25 and A12. It is bounded by the river Crouch to the south and to the east and west by creeks running into the Crouch. The town centre supports a range of small specialist and convenience stores in a pleasant car-free environment, and the town also has two large supermarkets. The local facilities, include a leisure centre, country park, wildlife centre and park. There are three small industrial estates. There are a number of special interest clubs and societies together with extensive sports facilities. The library is a shared facility with the co-educational Secondary school. There are five primary schools. The Church of England and Roman Catholic primary schools share a site with the Church of the Holy Trinity. On the outskirts of the town there is a Garden of Remembrance

### The Church

The Church of the Holy Trinity is part of the Chelmsford Deanery and a member of the Compass Churches Mission and Ministry Unit. It is situated on the edge of the town centre and was dedicated in 1982 replacing the original mission church that had been built in the 1920s. It is a purpose built Local Ecumenical Project, jointly owned by the Anglican, Methodist and Roman Catholic congregations and is managed and run by a Joint Church Council. There is seating for 150 people, which can be greatly increased by using the two adjoining Church primary school halls. A small meeting room is situated at the front of the building, together with the sacristy and the church office.

Whilst each church has its own service every Sunday morning followed by coffee in the meeting room, there are opportunities for joint worship services throughout the year. During recent years, the church has benefited from the installation of an electronic digital organ, 360- degree camera, interactive projector, and screen. We are connected to Wi-fi and have a sound system with the facility to stream services.



## **Worship**

The pattern of Sunday worship held in Holy Trinity Church is:

08.45 Roman Catholic Holy Mass

10.00 Anglican Service

11.15 Methodist Service

Our form of worship is traditional and in the past has centred every Sunday morning around the Sacrament of Holy Communion, with occasional use of incense on special feast days. We use the hymn book 'Ancient and Modern' and are fortunate that we have a volunteer organist to lead the music. The laity play an important part in our services. Lay people deliver the readings and lead intercessions. There are servers who assist the vicar in delivering the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Pre-covid, Lay Ministers of the Eucharist offered Holy Communion to the infirm and housebound members of the congregation. During the vacancy, lay people have also started to lead worship and preach.

The majority of baptisms take place monthly on a Sunday afternoon. There is a team of lay ministers of the Eucharist and a lay person to support baptism. We hold occasional joint services with the Methodist community including Christmas Eve, Harvest, Remembrance Sunday, and the Crib service which is aimed at the younger members of all three congregations. We hold inter-denominational study groups for Advent and Lent.

## **Other Churches**

Within the town, other churches consist of the Evangelical Church, the New Life Church, and the Salvation Army. The Christian Council meets regularly and consists of representatives from all the Christian Churches in the town. In our desire to reach out to the community, we hold joint events, such as a Town Carol Service, the World Day of Prayer service, and an event in the centre of town on Good Friday.

## **Finance**

Our parish continues to struggle to meet our Family purse commitments, although the gap between target and achievement continues to vary (100% in 2019, 68% in 2020, 81% in 2021, 89% in 2022). We are constantly trying to address the shortfall and organise many fundraising events during the year.

## **Schools**

The church school is Trinity St. Mary's - an aided Primary School. After the recent Ofsted Inspection in March 2023, the school was judged to be continuing as a good school. The PCC appoints a proportion of the school's governors, and they are active in the life of the school. It is hoped that the new incumbent would wish to fill the current vacancy on the governing body and play a full and active part in the life of the school. Up until our present vacancy, the incumbent celebrated weekly collective worship.



There are four other primary schools in the town. The William de Ferrers School is an 11 - 18 coeducational Secondary school. The students from these schools are welcomed into church on occasions.

## Charities

Each year we support one local and national charity. They are chosen at the annual meeting for a three yearly term. Other charities are supported in cash or in kind as the need or opportunity arises.

## Priorities

We believe that in South Woodham Ferrers our priorities should be:

1. To make Hill and Vale Churches work effectively; adding value for all of the churches included within it, developing the church within its varying communities, raising its profile and seeking to attract non-church goers. Holy Trinity, St Marys and St Andrews have all been working together to some degree over the last few years. We believe that this needs to be taken further recognising the available capacity of both clergy and laity to undertake new initiatives. We need to work together so that we are 'more than the sum of our parts'.
2. To grow our church and attract a new congregation of all ages, whilst being aware of and responsive to the needs of the existing congregations. We need to reconnect with people who have left the church. The congregation at Holy Trinity has been declining for some years. We believe that we have worked hard to maintain the levels of church attendance and the reach of the church into the community but it is clear that there is more to do.
3. To develop a much greater degree of pastoral care especially for those going through particularly trying times because of sickness, bereavement or other issues. In trying to reach out in all sorts of ways we believe that the importance of pastoral care has been diminished. People, congregants and others, have been left to cope when time given to express support would have eased problems and anxieties. We believe that an enhancement to this type of spiritual support would be of support to the current congregation and be a part of developing a wider impact in the community.
4. To continue to focus on effective stewardship of the church and its resources and to have good relations with colleagues throughout the diocese. We have worked hard to fulfil our commitments to the diocese; for instance concentrating on trying to achieve our parochial financial targets. We need to be re-energised in this continuing challenge and to be helped to work with, contributing to and learning from, our colleagues throughout the diocese, especially the Deanery and other mission groups.
5. A particular focus in South Woodham Ferrers must be to work with our fellow Roman Catholic and Methodist congregations who worship with us and with whom we share the church building. We share the same building and actively seek to support and work with our fellow church users. The building is managed by a Joint Church Council and its fabric committee. We have shared worship especially with the Methodist congregation and we aim to ensure good communication between the churches and to share our successes as well as our challenges. But this is an on-going commitment and a continuing aspiration to this venture more than simply sharing a building but to make it a living example of church unity

## USEFUL WEBSITES

Holy Trinity Church - <http://www.holytrinityswf.org.uk>

Trinity St Mary's School - [www.trinitystmarys.com](http://www.trinitystmarys.com) William de Ferrers School - [www.wdfschool](http://www.wdfschool)

Town Council - [www.southwoodhamferrersstc.gov.uk](http://www.southwoodhamferrersstc.gov.uk)



## MINI-PROFILE: WOODHAM FERRERS (SAINT MARY)

### Vision Statement

A community of people totally committed to Jesus and each other and committed to sharing his love and compassion to those in the wider community.



To achieve this:

- We are committed to regular worship
- We are committed to learning about God and so deepening our faith
- We are committed to using and allowing to be used the gifts of the spirit in all aspects of our life together
- We are totally committed to each other in caring Christian relationships
- We encourage all members to take part in our services by reading, leading intercessions, managing the music, leading services when required
- We open the church on Tuesday mornings for visitors to drop in
- We hold social events such as musical concerts and special events open to the whole community

### Who We Are Looking For

The disruption caused by Covid has impacted on church attendance and the range of activities we provide at St Mary's and although our number of worshippers has remained fairly constant it is quite small. We need someone who will support us going forward who is:

- enthusiastic with an ability to help us develop new ideas
- a good communicator able to encourage the participation of young people
- an inspirational preacher
- a strong pastoral leader
- a team player who will work with all those currently keeping everything going
- gifted with a strong sense of humour and patience

We need someone who will help us to grow our congregation by:

- forging bonds with the families who have their children baptised at our church
- supporting couples who choose to marry in our church beyond their wedding day
- building relationships with those bereaved families for whom we provide funerals
- liaising with the local school regularly and encouraging them to join us or lead some of our services
- leading our Bible Study group



## What We Can Offer

The parish of Woodham Ferrers and Bicknacre has a population of just over 3,000 and the village of Woodham Ferrers lies between South Woodham Ferrers and Bicknacre. It is approximately 6 miles from Chelmsford and Maldon.

The Bell pub lies across the road from the church and the Church of England Aided Primary School is a short walk away and is in the catchment area for the William de Ferrers school.

The village hall is in use seven days a week offering a range of activities for adults, children and all ages.

There is also a Baptist Chapel in the village which in addition to their Sunday service has the Schoolroom and a community café open on Wednesdays. It also has a food hub and parent and toddler group.

The village is surrounded by farmland and the large churchyard overlooks the RHS Garden Hyde Hall. There are many footpaths nearby and there are a range of walks of varying length which start and finish at the church. Although there are few amenities in the village, South Woodham Ferrers is very close which has a wide range of public facilities in addition to the railway station.

## The Building

The church was originally built by Robert de Ferrers in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and is situated in a beautiful setting with panoramic views of the surrounding countryside. The surviving building dates to various phases between 1250 and 1330 and it was 'restored' in 1884. At one time there was an early 16<sup>th</sup> century tower of flint and stone but this collapsed and had to be demolished and the tower arch bricked up. The wooden tower and belfry now rest on a big tie beam. However the church has many interesting historical features including the remnants of a 'Doom' painting.

We were successful in gaining a Heritage Lottery Grant of £189,200 to carry out structural repairs to the church including repairs to the bell tower, the installation of new lighting, and a new sound system with drop down screen and projector (plus an audio loop) and to establish St Mary's as a Heritage Visitor Centre. We have recently appointed a Heritage Activity Officer who will work with the church family and local partners to deliver a number of heritage projects based at St Mary's. It is aimed for this project to end in Spring 2024 by which time there will be a permanent Doom painting exhibition, an improved exhibition of the fallen from the two world wars, a current digital map of the graves in the graveyard accessible on line, access to a recording reminiscences project, a children's churchyard trail and the strengthening of ties with the local community.

[www.stmarysheritagehub.co.uk](http://www.stmarysheritagehub.co.uk).





## Worship

St Mary's is the more formal of the two churches in the parish. There is an organ and a piano for when a player is available, otherwise CDs are used or music streamed. As the Parish church for the area, St Mary's is regularly in use for baptisms, weddings and funeral services and has always had strong links with the parish of South Woodham Ferrers and is popular with residents there for these types of services.

## Congregation

The congregation is relatively small, averaging 10-15 people with an older profile.

During our vacancy Revd Canon Andy Griffiths has regularly led the Holy Communion Services and Morning Worship is lay led. We have one Authorised Preacher plus other members who lead services.

## Special Services

### *Carols by Candlelight*

An atmospheric, candlelit service held the week before Christmas that is always well attended

### *Midnight Communion*

This service on Christmas Eve is also well attended by the community who are keen to have a traditional start to their Christmas

### *Service for the Bereaved*

This is held in November. It is open to all who have been bereaved at any time but invitations are sent to those families who have had a funeral service at the church in the previous 12 months.

### *Remembrance Sunday*

A joint service with St Andrew's and the Chapel takes place at St Mary's for the whole community to which Cubs, Scouts, Brownies and Guides are also invited to remember those who gave their lives in the two world wars

## Charity and Overseas Mission

Jointly with St Andrew's we are committed to supporting several charities. Currently we are supporting Compassion, sponsoring a child in Uganda. We also support Royal British Legion, Blesma, CHESS and the local foodbank.





## MINI-PROFILE: BICKNACRE (SAINT ANDREW)

### About Bicknacre Village

Bicknacre, within the parish of Woodham Ferrers and Bicknacre, is an attractive Essex village with lots of history. It is approximately 4 miles north of South Woodham Ferrers and 5 ½ miles South-east of the City of Chelmsford. In 2018 it had an estimated population of 2263.

There was a hermitage in the centre of the current village until the end of 1154 when it was converted into a Priory. This was known as Woodham Priory until 1235, when the name Bicknacre first occurred. The Arch, a listed building, is all that remains of the Priory. It dates from around 1250.

Bicknacre village is the site of The Hospital & Homes of St. Giles founded in 1914, by a community of Church of England monks and nuns, specifically for the care and treatment of leprosy.

St. Andrew's Church is, appropriately, situated in an old carpenter's workshop which was converted into a chapel for local people by a nun from St. Giles, Sister Hannah. Later the two adjoining cottages were purchased and slowly merged into the building seen today.

Bicknacre was a relatively small hamlet on the main road between South Woodham Ferrers and Maldon until the 1970's, when several estate developments were built. This continued through the turn of the century, when Bicknacre reached its current population. There have recently been some infill developments but no new large areas of buildings are planned. There is a range of housing from one bedroom starter houses to large family homes.

Currently, Bicknacre village has a one-form entry County Primary School, two pubs, a village store with post office, a doctor's surgery and a variety of other shops including a greengrocer and a butcher. There is a village hall attached to Priory School which is well-used for a variety of activities. We are fortunate to have a popular Petting Farm and children's play barn with café also within White Elm Garden Centre. There is an hourly bus service to Chelmsford and South Woodham Ferrers.

There are several voluntary organisations within the village, such as Scouts, St Andrew's Baby and Toddler group, a Friendship Group and Bridge clubs for older people, as well as Jesters Day Nursery and an after school club. Organisations for sports such as badminton and football use the local facilities in Priory Fields.

Bicknacre is a small friendly place and most residents feel that there is a great community spirit here with people caring for one another.

### About St Andrew's Church

St Andrew's church in Bicknacre began to offer services to the local community in 1983. The congregation continued to grow and by the 1990s numbers reached as many as 100 on any given Sunday. St Andrew's building has undergone extensive refurbishment over the last few years,



converting two cottages which were attached into the Dave Cox Room and toilets. The church roof has been redone and is now water tight.

Previous Parish Priests regularly led assemblies at Priory Primary School Bicknacre and St Mary's CofE Primary, Woodham Ferrers. For many years, the schools were invited to sing carols at our Christmas Market which was a popular event, along with a Crib service nearer Christmas.

Historically, St Andrew's Church held week-day prayer meetings for particular reasons, 24-hour prayer days, prayer weeks for specific subjects, fortnightly bible study house groups as well as Praise and Worship Meetings and Quiet Days, organised by various church members.

St Andrew's congregation numbers currently range between 20 and 30 each Sunday, ages range roughly from 40 to 80+ years plus visiting grandchildren from time to time. Although most members live in Bicknacre, there are several who travel in from other places such as South Woodham Ferrers, Great Baddow and Maldon.

The church style of worship would probably be considered as low, a relaxed style of worship with some members of the congregation feeling free to express themselves during worship songs. Currently we are led in musical worship by one guitarist, accompanied by one singer, both doing an amazing job, but who would welcome others to join them. They are ably assisted by a team of people who can work our laptop and projector to project lyrics and sometimes visual clips onto the large screen. Services begin at 9.30 am and usually last around 60/75 minutes.

A good number of the congregation lead intercessions (occasionally as a time of open prayer), read the readings, carry out sidesman duties, create various rotas, and provide tea/coffee etc at the end of services.

Joint services, with other churches take place on the fifth Sunday of the month and for specific occasions such as Mothering Sunday and Harvest.

St Andrew's accommodates a Baby and Toddler Group on Monday mornings organised by the daughter of two members and supported by member volunteers. An independent Bridge Club meets on Monday afternoons. From June 2023 a member of the church started opening the church building between 2pm and 4pm each Thursday as a social space for anyone who felt like dropping in for a cuppa and chat or to play board games/puzzles.

Church members are partial to the Quiz Nights some members have organised, which are fun social gatherings with the bonus of raising funds for the church. These provide a great chance to invite friends and family who might not otherwise venture into a church building.

We are a very welcoming church, and have a good relationship with other churches in the area, particularly our other parish church, St Marys, Woodham Ferrers, as well as The Chapel (Eastern Baptist Association) Woodham Ferrers and Holy Trinity South Woodham Ferrers. In August 2023, the three CofE churches were joined with All Saints Church East Hanningfield and called the "Hill and Vale Churches".





### **Our Parish Vision Statement**

*A community of people totally committed to Jesus Christ and each other and committed to sharing His love and compassion to those in the wider community.*

St Andrew's is a ministering community rather than a community gathered around a minister.

### **Who St. Andrew's Church Is Looking For**

Despite COVID restrictions limiting face to face worship in both St Andrew's Church and St Mary's Church, we mostly maintained our number of worshippers through online Zoom services each Sunday and even gained several additional online worshippers. That said, our prayer and house groups suffered disruption and have yet to recover.

We are looking for a Parish Priest who will:

- Challenge and inspire us to deepen our faith and enable us to share the good news of the gospel
- Engage with our social commitments and help us to forge bonds with local families, celebrating their joys and successes and supporting those who are bereaved or lonely
- Help us to recover the historically close links with Priory School and to engage with teens and people of all ages in the parish
- Encourage and nurture the many gifts that our members have to further benefit the community



## THE VICARAGE

The Vicarage is at 18 Victoria Road, South Woodham Ferrers CM3 5LR

It is a modern detached house in a quiet cul-de-sac. It has four good-sized bedrooms, one with en-suite shower room, and a family bathroom. On the ground floor there is a lounge, dining room, kitchen/breakfast room, study, utility, and cloakroom. It has a double garage, an extensive rear garden and ample car parking space at the front. Expenses are paid in line with diocesan recommendations. The Vicarage is within walking distance of Holy Trinity Church, the town centre and railway station.



## THE DEANERY

The current Deanery of Chelmsford is one of the larger deaneries in the diocese, having been formed on 1 December 2020 from the two deaneries of Chelmsford North and South. There are 33 parishes and 39 church buildings used for worship in the deanery. The purpose of joining the two deaneries was to better co-ordinate a response to rapid housing growth, particularly in the City of Chelmsford where the old deanery boundaries ran through the heart of the City. The Deanery of Chelmsford has some joyful aspects which we are pleased to celebrate together. The clergy chapter meet regularly to worship together, share the news and information and to pray for each other. Chapter meetings are valued as a welcome time of collegiate identity. Most of the parishes in the Deanery have formed 'Mission and Ministry Units' and this continues as we seek to 'Travel well together' as members of the diocese.

The Hill and Vale churches are part of the Mission and Ministry unit known as the 'Compass Group' which incorporates churches in a large sweep to the south of the deanery from Little Baddow round to Stock. This post in the Hill and Vale churches is a key post not only incorporating the largest conurbation in the MMU (South Woodham Ferrers) but also in helping the MMU continue to work together in common purpose and mission as the minister becomes established.

Part of the task is to raise up Locally Deployed Ordained and Authorised Lay Ministers to equip and energise the local churches, and part is to foster a willingness for stipendiary clergy to partner across parish boundaries to oversee and enable all churches of the MMU to flourish in their own mission context. We look for a willingness and desire to be part of this ministry and to welcoming the new Priest of The Hill and Vale Churches.

I hope you find the profile stimulating and encouraging as you consider this post and the call of God.

*Rev Canon Tim Ball*

Area Dean, Deanery of Chelmsford



## THE COMPASS CHURCHES

The Compass Churches aim to work together, inspiring communities to grow in the Christian faith through mission, outreach and presence. 35,650 people live in the boundaries of the Compass Churches and our main goal is to spread the word of Christ to as many of them as possible. Together we can achieve more than we can individually. Our combined resources can be harnessed to attain our goals!

The Compass Churches Group was commissioned on 10 February 2018 and is made up of 12 churches. This group now makes up what is called a Mission and Ministry Unit (MMU) of the Diocese of Chelmsford. These have been set up so that as clergy retire and may not be replaced, people can work together to see there are sufficient ordained and licensed people to run our churches successfully. We are all getting to know each other well and can be supportive in times of illness or vacancies. We meet for Morning Prayer each Thursday online, where clergy and lay people take part in the readings and prayers. We have run a combined Alpha Course, have had a group Songs of Praise and we arrange times for churchwardens, Secretaries, Treasurers and safeguarding leaders to meet together and share good practice. We hope to explore more areas such as old people's homes ministry and school work. We look forward to working together in the future.

Revd Terry Brown, Rector of Sandon and Priest in Charge of East Hanningfield, Co-Chair of  
Compass Churches



**St Mary's, Woodham Ferrers**



When I'm standing on the mountain,  
I didn't get there on my own.  
When I'm walking through the valley,  
I know I'm not alone.

Tauren Wells, "Hills and Valleys"

