

# ST LUKE'S & CHRIST CHURCH CHELSEA



# PARISH PROFILE

Photos in this profile are courtesy of Mark Grey, Emma Darwin, Jayne Lloyd and others.



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# Bishop's Welcome



*The parish of St Luke's and Christ Church sits between the Fulham Road and the River Thames in Chelsea, at the heart of central West London. It is a vibrant and dynamic parish within a diverse and significant part of the city. The area is home to luxury shops and expensive private housing, often side by side with estates and Council housing. St Luke's and Christ Church have built a strong reputation for engaging with all members of the community, welcoming residents from every background and walk of life.*

*The parish offers an exciting opportunity for a priest who can encourage a prayerful, Spirit-led vision for mission. building on recent numerical growth, a long tradition of engagement with social issues, and well-established connections within the local community. The high number of occasional offices, the thriving programme of musical events, and strong partnerships with local schools and other organisations provide rich opportunities for deepening mission and sharing the love and life of Christ in this vibrant part of London.*

*This post calls for an incumbent who will relish living in central London, who can relate with warmth and ease to people from a wide variety of social and international backgrounds, and who brings the energy to develop their own voice and vision within the life of the church. In recent years the congregations have grown steadily, and there is a shared desire to continue building the church in both faith and number—especially by responding positively and creatively to the significant growth among young families.*

*The parish is rooted in the Liberal Catholic tradition, and its worship life reflects that heritage. The successful candidate will therefore need the liturgical skills and experience to support and enrich this tradition, while also bringing creativity to its ongoing development. Alongside this, there is a strong desire to expand the parish's outreach to families and young adults, offering opportunities to nurture faith and deepen belonging across the generations.*

*The Diocese of London, and within it, the Kensington Area, is a supportive place in which to live and to minister. The Diocesan Strategy, 'Capital Vision 2030', emphasises the need for clergy well-being, alongside the broad ambitions of Confident Disciples, Compassionate Communities, and Creative Growth, as well becoming a younger, safer, and more racially just church. Within this context, the parish benefits from strong collegiality with neighbouring clergy, the encouragement of a supportive patron, and the guidance of an Episcopal Area marked by unity, shared purpose, and a clear missional direction rooted in worship and witness together.*



# St Luke's & Christ Church

## ***'Two churches in one parish giving heart and soul to the Chelsea community'***

St Luke's & Christ Church, Chelsea is **a parish with two churches that are both in the liberal-catholic tradition**, and each blessed with good sized, mixed age/background congregations (around 400 worshippers attending weekly across both churches), excellent choirs, and whose buildings, finances and administration are all in good order.

**We value the strong liturgical music tradition** of our parish with its excellent choirs and musicians who enrich worship in our churches.

**We cherish the many children and families** who make up our congregations, and we are committed to continuing our long tradition of supporting local education, especially our local parish school, Christ Church.

We are **custodians of historically significant and treasured buildings** which we seek to steward responsibly and use for the benefit of our community.

**St Luke's and Christ Church are friendly, inclusive and welcoming places.** The doors of St Luke's are open daily and tangibly express our commitment to be a sign of God's presence in the Chelsea community: a place of welcome, open for everyone at all points in their life.

We are proud of how **we work as a team**. We nurture a collaborative, collegiate attitude in our ministry that expresses itself in how our two congregations and choirs, staff and clergy work together as well as how we conduct ourselves in our parish and deanery.

As part of the Diocese of London, **we share a vision of a Church for London** that is both Christ-centred and outward looking, and we seek to contribute to the Diocesan Vision that every Londoner will encounter the love of God in Christ Jesus. In this, we seek to be more confident in speaking and living the Gospel of Jesus Christ, more compassionate in serving communities with the love of God and more creative in reaching new people and places in the power of the Spirit.

# The Parish

## Local Area

The parish consists of the two old parish districts of St Luke and of Christ Church. These cover an area of Chelsea (115 hectares) stretching from the Embankment to Fulham Road, and from Old Church Street to almost the back of Peter Jones and Lower Sloane Street. (See Appendix 3)

Commerce and business retail are the main focus of the area with King's Road running through the centre of the parish. More recently offices and creatives have also moved into the parish.

In regards to **public transport** links, easy connections across London are provided through the nearby tube stations South Kensington and Sloane Square, and various bus routes intersect through the parish. Many of London's attractions, museums, galleries and theatres are within walking distance.

The nearest **Post Office** is in the Stable Yard of the Royal Hospital, and for **grocery shopping**, Waitrose, Marks & Spencer's and Whole Food Market are on the King's Road and there are numerous other express supermarkets throughout the parish.

**Hospitals** in our parish are the Royal Brompton and The Royal Marsden. The parish also includes the Royal Hospital which cares for military pensioners. Most parishioners go to the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital for general medical care and there are several GP surgeries in the parish.

There are **several cultural attractions** in or near our parish including the South Kensington museums. The two significant attractions in our parish are the National Army Museum and the Chelsea Physic Garden.

**The Chelsea Town Hall** is at the centre of the parish and contains meeting rooms, the local library, and, at the back, the Chelsea Sports Centre.



## Demographics<sup>1</sup>

The population of this parish is **9,800**.

According to the Church Urban Fund Parish Data, our parish is around average on the deprivation scale for parishes in the country. (It ranks **5,955** out of **12,178**, where 1 is the most deprived parish). Those figures disguise a very significant disparity of wealth amongst parish residents: The parish includes some of the most expensive housing in the UK, as well as several charity and council estates. There is also a significant homeless population. Within the population of the parish, 59% consider themselves economically active and there is a high portion of people living in single person households. There is also a high percentage who travel into the borough for work.

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea is one of the smallest London boroughs but with one of the **highest residential densities** in the country with 143,375 people living in 4.5 square miles.

In terms of ethnicity, 74.5% of the parish population are recorded as white, 4.3% black, 10% as Asian, 4.7% mixed and 6.5% other. In terms of religion, 57.5% describe themselves as Christian, 6.8% Muslim and 2.1% Jewish, 1.1% Hindu, 0.9% Buddhist, 0.1% Sikh, 0.6% other religion and 20% have no religion.



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<sup>1</sup> Data taken from the Church Urban Fund, <https://cuf.org.uk/>, accessed September 2025; and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea website <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/public-health/joint-strategic-needs-assessment/people>; accessed September 2025.

# Our People

## Church Community

Our churches are diverse, multi-generational communities with a high number of children and families. There are 315 on the electoral roll (after 2025 renewal). The St Luke's and Christ Church congregations are distinct with characteristics unique to each, and we enjoy mixing in together for joint services and shared events across the year. An average service at St Luke's comprises approximately 120 adults (plus 25-30 children) and at Christ Church approximately 80-90 adults (plus 60-90 children).

Like most London churches, we have many who are not regular Sunday worshippers, but feel a strong connection to our churches, engaging in the life and community of our parish through our school, as members of weekday groups like Youth Group, Coffee Morning Group, Toddler Group or our foodbank. Our high number of baptisms, weddings and funerals attests to those who consider our churches 'their home' and will return for these significant life events.

## Clergy

Our parish currently has two full-time stipendiary clergy. We are also a training parish meaning that we have an additional, locally supported, stipendiary full-time curate. All clergy work across the two churches collaboratively.

Rector, *Vacant*

Associate Vicar, Revd Dr Daniel Inman

Curate, Revd Baxter McRolston



## Church Office

Based out of St Luke's Crypt; we have a dedicated office team that works to support our parish. The church office is assisted by a pool of casual workers and small business suppliers with bookkeeping, IT, gardening, maintenance, cleaning, hospitality and website administration.

Parish Administrator (Full time), Tracy  
 Bursar (Full time), John McVeigh  
 Children & Young Ministry Administrator / Christ Church Verger (20 hours per week) Anna Stamenova  
 Youth Worker (14 hours per week plus 7 hours for YMIC), Jess Masters-Carrer  
 St Luke's Verger (approx. 10 hours per week) Sue Buchan  
 Property Administrator (22.5 hours per week), *Vacant*

## Music

Each church has excellent Directors of Music and Organists and a Director of the Children's Choir who works from St Luke's.

St Luke's Director of Music, Jeremy Summerly  
 St Luke's Organist, Rupert Jeffcoat  
 Christ Church Director of Music, Dr Gareth Wilson  
 Christ Church Organist, Joe McHardy  
 Director of the Children's Choir (15 hours per week), Polina Sosnina - *on maternity leave*  
 Director of the Children's Choir, Maternity Cover (15 hours per week), Helen Ashby



## Parochial Church Council (PCC), Church Wardens & Safeguarding Officers

There is one PCC and there are two Churchwardens for each church (Christ Church have job share wardens). There is a Safeguarding Officer for each church and three people on Deanery Synod. All the individuals are also members of our PCC. In 2025, we amalgamated our two DCCs into the PCC, which meets four times a year and our APCM is in May. Our Standing Committee comprises the Incumbent, the PCC Treasurer and our Churchwardens. We currently do not have a PCC Secretary.

Sophie Wilson (St Luke's Churchwarden)  
 Tim McKean (St Luke's Churchwarden)  
 Jonathan Price (Christ Church Churchwarden, job share)  
 Louisa Price (Christ Church Churchwarden, job share)  
 Millie Kirkland (Christ Church Churchwarden, job share)  
 Julie Clancy (Christ Church Churchwarden, job share)  
 Elizabeth Watson-Steele (Safeguarding Officer, Christ Church & Synod)  
 Duncan Kennedy (Safeguarding Officer, St Luke's)  
 Owen Ryan (PCC Treasurer)  
 Alexander Banbury  
 Janet Gower (Synod)  
 Elizabeth Brutus  
 Nicola Ellard (Synod)  
 Brenda Hagerty  
 Jacqueline Poysden

## Safeguarding in the Parish

Safeguarding is an integral part of the life and ministry of our churches and we are committed to maintaining environments that are safe for all who enter our premises and/or interact with us.

We have a Parish Safeguarding Officer who maintains the Parish Dashboard and attends Deanery meetings for shared best practice, and who is trained and ready to support/manage a concern raised and liaise directly with the Diocesan Safeguarding team, if/as needed.

Our policies and procedures are reviewed annually, and safeguarding is on the agenda for every Standing Committee and PCC meeting.

We also have a Children's Champion and a separate Recruiter who deals with DBS checks and volunteer agreements.

We aim and undertake to:

- Promote a safe environment and culture.
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults.
- Respond promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Care pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse or other affected persons.
- Care pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns/allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Respond to those that may pose a present risk.

## Volunteer Roles

Our churches are blessed with teams of volunteers who assist with a variety of activities, from sidesperson duties, Sunday School and youth volunteers, providing tea and coffee after services, running our foodbank, and flower arranging and gardening. We also have a large pool of volunteers who assist with special events, such as the Summer Fair.



# Worship

In both churches worship is centred around a weekly parish choral eucharist and the Daily Office. Preaching and the choral tradition is highly valued with adult choirs at both churches and a separate Children's Choir that sings at both churches from time to time. Evensong is sung weekly. Vestments are worn in both churches and both churches reserve the Blessed Sacrament. Some have described St Luke's as feeling akin to cathedral worship, while Christ Church is often appreciated for its more intimate 'village parish church' feel.

## Services

**Morning Prayer** 9.00am Tuesday to Thursday at St Luke's, Mondays at Christ Church

**Weekday Eucharist** 12.30pm Thursdays at St Luke's

**Book of Common Prayer Eucharist** 8.00am Sundays at St Luke's

**Sung Eucharist** 10.30 am Sundays at St Luke's

**Sung Eucharist** 11.00am Sundays at Christ Church

**Choral Evensong** 3.00pm Sundays at St Luke's

**All Age Family Service** 9.30am once a month in term time at Christ Church



## Feast Days & Special Services

We follow the Church of England's liturgical calendar and adhere to the customs of liturgical seasons, marking the major feasts.

Our congregations and choirs unite for joint parish services on our patronal festivals, for an annual Confirmation service and for our Ash Wednesday and Ascension Day services.



We process between the two churches on Palm Sunday. The liturgies of Holy Week are shared between the two churches.

We hold separate Harvest services each year at which we make a collection for our foodbank.



We mark Remembrance Sunday with a special service at St Luke's, with representatives from the Armed Services and the Scouts. Remembrance Sunday is of particular importance at St Luke's because of the Punjab Frontier Force side chapel and the Guhka Memorial Chapel in our crypt.

We mark All Souls with a sung requiem mass.

We are a parish that values hospitality as part of its celebration of the liturgical year. For example, Ash Wednesday is preceded by an all-age Pancake Party, and at Easter we provide children's Easter egg hunts.

## Musical Staff & Choirs

St Luke's has a large, voluntary choir which sings at both the Sung Eucharist and Choral Evensong each week (see their website: [www.vinumbonum.org.uk](http://www.vinumbonum.org.uk)). The choir also accommodates some young choral scholars. The Choir of Christ Church is smaller but is likewise comprised mainly of recent graduates who perform to a high standard and often perform new compositions. Both churches have a deservedly renowned musical tradition that is cherished by their congregations.

St Luke's Choir tours regularly - both internationally and to UK cathedrals - and sings each year at Westminster Abbey. It is now also annually invited to broadcast a Choral Evensong on BBC Radio 3 and this year St Luke's will broadcast Radio 3's Epiphany Carol Service.

The Children's Choir rehearses weekly and sings in the Sunday worship of both churches once a month on average and at major feasts. The choir will sing Evensong, with the children's choir of St Martin-in-the-Fields at Southwark Cathedral in Spring 2026.



Photos: Mark Grey

### **Bellringers**

St Luke's has 10 bells that were all cast by the same founder and are contemporaneous with the 1824 church. The bells are run by a consortium of bellringers who also ring at St Mary Abbots Kensington and St Stephen's Rochester Row. At St Luke's, they ring each Sunday before the 10.30am service and they ring full peals and quarter peals for special events.

There is one bell at Christ Church which is rung before the service by a sidesperson.





# Church life

## **Pastoral Care**

Open during the week, St Luke's often receives people stopping at the Parish Office seeking support from the clergy. Both churches and the offices in the Crypt at St Luke's are used as pastoral spaces. Home visits, hospital visiting, and home communions are an important part of the care the clergy offer to parishioners. While the Royal Brompton and the The Royal Marsden hospitals (within the parish) have their own chaplains, our clergy are occasionally called upon to provide the Sacrament to the sick.

## **Life Events**

### Baptisms

The majority of baptisms are arranged for Sundays outside the services, with a follow-up welcome at the main service the following week. Children of regular worshippers are often baptised during the main Sung Eucharist (on average 4-6-times a year). In 2024, there were 53 baptisms across the parish. Preparation evenings are held, and follow-up cards are sent on the baptism anniversary.

### Weddings

In 2024, there were a total of 15 weddings or wedding blessings in the parish. Each couple is seen on several occasions by the clergy person taking the service and marriage preparation dinners are arranged. Couples receive an anniversary card.

### Funerals

In 2023, there were 28 funeral or memorial services, with a further 5 taking place at the crematorium or cemetery. Memorial services are often large and high-profile. A special All Souls Service is held in each church annually, with invitations sent to bereaved families. Chelsea Funeral Directors also hosts an annual memorial service at St Luke's.

### Confirmation

We run a confirmation course every year in the Summer for children aged 10 and above. On average we have 15 junior candidates. Adults also regularly seek confirmation in the parish or at St Paul's Cathedral. In 2023, 22 persons were confirmed.

## Children & Young People

A special quality of our churches is the large number of children who make up our Sunday worshipping community.

We have a part-time Children & Youth Ministry Administrator and a part-time Youth Worker. Together, supported by teams of volunteers, they deliver a gold-standard Sunday School across both

churches attended by over 100 children per week. Our family service, which takes place at Christ Church the first Sunday of every month, is attended usually by 100-110 children. In our register we have approximately 300 children.



Our Youth Group meets on alternate Thursdays in term time. Young people are made welcome, share food and build friendships – all within a setting that models sacramental care. Several times a year our youth join together with other liturgical churches for special events, organised through Youth Ministry in Communion (YMIC).

Most of the children in our churches attend or attended Christ Church and Holy Trinity Primary School and see our clergy during the school week for assemblies. Each week, Christ Church pupils attend services in the church. There is, for most children and families, a familiarity and connectedness to our churches, staff and clergy fostered by this close relationship with the primary schools.

## Eco Church

St Luke's has achieved a Bronze award in A Rocha's Eco Church Scheme. This has been awarded based on five categories: Worship and Teaching, Buildings, Land, Community and Global Action, and Lifestyle. We aim to continue our progress by achieving advanced awards in the future as part of our broader commitment to creation care.

## Retreats, Small Groups & Lecture Series

There is a Parish Retreat yearly at Douai Abbey in Berkshire and occasional day pilgrimages. During the autumn and Lent, we also host parish lectures (combined with supper) that have in recent years explored Scripture, the Christian tradition, history and spirituality. These lectures are led by our

clergy and by guest speakers. Recently, these have been combined with tours - informed by theology and spirituality - of the Victoria and Albert Museum and The National Gallery.

A well-established lay-led Bible Study Group meets every Tuesday morning.

We have recently started a book group for young adults that meets every six weeks.



### **Communication**

We stay in touch with our congregations and community through a weekly newsletter and we also have a monthly parish e-magazine. The parish is active on Facebook, X and Instagram.

Our church website is <https://chelseaparish.org/>

The church office is located in the Crypt at St Luke's and is open, 9.00am-5.00pm, Monday-Friday.



# Outreach

## An Open Church

St Luke's is open every day, seven days a week, providing a place for passersby to rest, pray, and reflect. It is a particularly important space for those visiting the Royal Brompton, a world renowned hospital that specialises in heart and lung care and is located across the street from the church.

The daily opening of St Luke's is facilitated by the staff of Café Portico, which is located at the front entrance of the church. The café, run by a church family, is a magnet for people because of its food and location. The presence of the café also serves in drawing in visitors into the church, resulting in some 500+ people using the church as a place to pray, light a candle or rest each week.

## Seniors Group Coffee Morning

We host a Seniors Group Coffee Morning each Wednesday for local people in conjunction with the Community Support Officer. This is a popular midweek activity for those who spend much time in isolation.



## Foodbank

We host a weekly foodbank in St Luke's Vestry on Tuesdays. The foodbank is staffed by volunteers from our parish and the wider community and it supports up to 60 families and individuals with fresh and dried food that is donated by local agencies, shops and individuals.

## Summer Fair & St Nicholas Fair

St Luke's hosts a well-known and very popular Summer Fair in the church grounds that attracts many parishioners and people from the wider community. The fair consists of stalls, live music, food and games, and we invite representatives from the Fire Brigade, Police, NHS, RNLI, Scouts and local charities to participate. Money raised from the fair supports the annual Summer Programme.

Christ Church holds a biannual St Nicholas Fair organised jointly with Christ Church and Holy Trinity School Federation. This involves a bazaar in the school hall and a tree display in the church.

## Summer Programme

Every year during the summer holidays, St Luke's runs a vibrant three-week programme starting in late July, designed for children aged 8 to 13. With a packed schedule of activities, games, and trips, we welcome around 80 young people to enjoy a variety of indoor and outdoor experiences in a safe, supportive, and fun environment. We encourage children to build new friendships and confidence. We also offer opportunities for older youth (aged 14 and up) to volunteer as mentors. The programme is entirely funded and there is no fee to attend.



## STEP-UP (Studying, Tutoring, Exam Prep)

Each Spring term break, the parish hosts a week long tutoring event for young people preparing for their GCSE and A-Level exams. The church utilises The Hut (one of the church's rentable spaces) over the week, providing a quiet space for personal revision and study, along with stationery and refreshments. This is run by the parish but we also engage professional tutors to help students boost their grades and receive one-on-one support.

## ABC Club

Every Thursday in term time we hold a parent and toddler group – the ABC Club – in Christ Church. Refreshments are provided for the adults and toys for the children. The morning ends with songs and a bible story facilitated by the Children & Families Administrator or clergy.



## Charitable Use of the Halls

The parish seeks to serve our local community by offering meeting spaces for free or at discounted rates. Examples of groups that we support include anonymous groups and community choirs.

## Carol Services

Each December there is a large number of high-profile charity carol services held at St Luke's. It is such a popular venue that dates are all booked by the previous January. Numbers attending these events were over 10,000 in December 2023. A number of other concerts are held during the year, also attracting large numbers to the church.

## Uniformed Groups

St Luke's Hall is home to the 9<sup>th</sup> Chelsea Scouts Group and the 10<sup>th</sup> Chelsea Brownies. Our uniformed groups aim to give children a sense of responsibility towards those around them and a sense of unity within their community.



## Special Events – St Luke's 200

Celebrations for the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St Luke's Church in 2024 illustrated the participatory, colourful, and creative nature of church life in our parish.

Throughout the year, former clergy of the parish preached at a number of the Sung Eucharists at St Luke's and there was a community performance of Noyes Fludde involving orchestral players, bands, singers and schoolchildren.

Thanks to support from the Peter Harrington Foundation, the Charles Dickens Museum, Carlyle's House and the National Trust, and coordination by Louisa Price, a creative writing study programme based upon archival exploration and visits to local venues was undertaken by 65 children from our church schools. This culminated in a celebratory evening's presentation.

Two other strands ran throughout the year; an eco-corridor development, in which land at the southeast end of St Luke's churchyard is to be opened up for community space in a shared initiative with the local council; and a movement towards financial stability.

The celebrations culminated in a united Festival Sung Eucharist for St Luke's Day in October 2024 at which the preacher was The Rt Revd Nick Holtam, formerly Bishop of Salisbury.



# Working in Partnership

## Federation of Christ Church and Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School

Christ Church (CofE) Primary School was founded by the parishioners of Christ Church in 1840 and has remained the church school for the parish ever since. In 2019 it entered into a federation with Holy Trinity (CofE) Primary. They are both very popular, voluntary-aided schools under the headship of Mrs Avis Hawkins.

The incumbent is ex officio Governor of the Federation. Clergy and PCC members are very active governors and many school families attend one of our churches. Clergy regularly conduct weekly assemblies. The schools have a Christ-Centred ethos and the visible presence and active leadership of members of the clergy on a daily basis is valued by children, parents and staff.



## Other schools & nurseries

Our parish has a long tradition of commitment to local education and the church continues its support for local schools, many of whom use the churches for special events and carol services.

Chelsea Academy is the joint local London Diocesan Board for Schools (51%) and RBKC (49%) secondary school. Our Associate Vicar is a Church Governor.

The parish also includes Marlborough Primary School and various independent schools. Hill House International School rents the Hall of Remembrance (the Christ Church 'parish hall') while St Luke's Hall is let to a private nursery and another nursery operates from the St Luke's crypt. The parish also has links with the state-funded Chelsea Open-Air Nursery School.

## Diocese of London, Kensington Area

Our parish maintains a confident relationship with our diocese and its bishops on a broad and local level. This can be seen in our sacramental tradition, especially when we prepare candidates for Confirmation and invite our Area Bishop in the spring to confirm our younger people and

subsequently further teenage and adult candidates at St Paul's Cathedral in the late autumn. We regularly participate in diocesan training days and social events, encouraging our congregation to participate where available. More locally, our parish plays an active part in our deanery life, which itself is formed of a diverse range of ecclesial expressions.

### **Youth Ministry in Communion**

In our youth ministry (ages 13-18) we are supported by Youth Ministry in Communion (YMIC), an organisation who encourages an sacramental approach to youth ministry within a network of churches across Kensington Area and Southwark Diocese. YMIC has enabled our parish to take our young people on boat trips down the Thames, go on camps to adventure centres, and trips to Taizé in France.

### **Glass Door**

We have strong links with the homeless charity Glass Door, which provides accommodation, advice and assistance for homeless people in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and in the Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. As well as promoting charitable giving and encouraging volunteer support for Glass Door, we provide space in the Hall of Remembrance as a winter night shelter. Last winter across all their night shelters, Glass Door provided emergency shelter every night for 22 weeks to 542 guests in total.

### **Christian Aid**

The parish is a faithful supporter of Christian Aid. We will respond when there are special appeals by offering our collections in both churches. We also take part in the annual Christian Aid Week, marking it in our Sunday services and with our children in Sunday School.

### **Local Partners**

Our churches, staff and congregations are actively involved in the social and cultural life of the local area. We are supporters of the King's Road Partnership – a consortium of businesses. Each year we participate in Carols on the Green and other such events. We work with the Cadogan Estate and have strong relationships with our local councillors.



CHRIST CHURCH

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# Finances & Resources

Our church finances are in good order. We share resources across both churches, and our accounts are filed in a timely fashion with the Charity Commission and the Diocese of London.

Our total parish annual expenditure is approximately £900,000 annually.

The church's income is from offering plate receipts, planned giving, bequests, investments and property hires. We also receive some grant funding for special projects. In addition, we have some restricted funds, including a significant restoration fund for St Luke's.

Our Parish's Common Fund contribution in 2024 was £191,610.

For more details you can find our 2024 accounts on the [Charity Commission's website](#)

Daily financial management is the responsibility of the Bursar who is supported by a bookkeeper and our PCC Treasurer.

The parish office is fully equipped with a network computer system (with broadband internet access on each computer), a telephone system, and photocopiers. The church uses Zero accountancy software and Booeko for managing property hires.



# Challenges & Opportunities

*This is a selection of points raised by our congregation and community about the challenges and opportunities that await our new rector.*

Responding to the exponential growth of families in our congregation and encouraging more interactions between those in our congregation from different ages and stages.

Recognising the role of our parish in responding to social concerns in our area.

Continuing to build strong connections with primary and secondary schools.

Strengthening our ministry to children and families and also young people.

Sustaining to and developing the life of two churches whilst ensuring both feel equally valued.

We are shortly going to start our next Quinquennial for St Luke's and anticipate the preservation of the roof and the bells will feature as items for careful consideration.

Work with the PCC, Treasurer, and the Finance team to ensure continued financial stability and work to grow resources to contend with future capital challenges around restoration of buildings.

Management of a staff team across our churches and the staff office.

There is potential to grow our congregations as well as numerical growth in mission work.

We could do more to engage with the changing demographics of Chelsea, including the elderly and those in single households.





# Our rector

We are looking for:

A new rector for St Luke's & Christ Church who will continue to **cherish the sacramental, liturgical tradition** of our churches, with a deep appreciation of music as a medium for worship.

**A leader for our local community who has an articulated vision for our churches.** They will be outward looking and passionate about sharing the good news of Christ in the liturgical tradition, and looking to grow the church community in faith, number and impact.

A rector who will maintain St Luke's and Christ Church as **open and inclusive churches** and embody this in their ministry.

Someone to **challenge us and be intellectually rigorous but with an accessible register**, catering to all the many different churchgoers that our parish attracts.

The ability to **see past popular perceptions of Chelsea and understand the real pastoral needs of our parish**, recognise areas of deprivation, be moved by social justice issues and alive to matters of social concern around us.

Someone with **proven managerial experience as well as experience in overseeing HR, finance, safeguarding and charity governance matters.** They should consult and communicate well with staff and clergy across churches.

The preferred candidate should demonstrate a strong desire to engage with and further the development of **close ties between the two Churches and the Federation of Christ Church and Holy Trinity Primary Schools.**

A priest with strong emotional intelligence and inter-personal skills, able to **connect to people from all spectrums of society with respect and care**, recognising in one day they may spend time with rough sleepers, next with lords and ladies, and always lots and lots of school children.

We are looking forward to welcoming a rector who will be an **enthusiastic member of our parish team**, ready to pitch in with good humour with the varied activities around our churches.

We need a **rector who is fully present for and in our parish**, prepared for busy days with school, hospital and homes visits, baptisms, funerals and wedding services. They need to be someone who will embrace the joy and chaos of parish life and be ready to put in the time to walk alongside others, building trust and meaningful relationships.

# Churches & Buildings

## St Luke's Church

St Luke's is a neo-gothic Grade 1 listed building designed by Joseph Savage and consecrated in 1824. It seats 1300 and has two galleries on the north and south side. The organ was built by John Compton in 1932 and incorporates some of the 1824 original. The church has a tower with a clock and its original 10 bells. On the south side of the church's chancel and altar is the Punjab Frontier Force memorial chapel, installed in the 1950s. There is a café located at the front entrance.

The St Luke's Vestry is on the east end of the church and is used for community gatherings and sometimes rented out.

The crypt extends the length of the church and was converted to office space in 1985. It contains storage areas, the Parish Office and other charity-based agencies including: Lymphoedema Support Network, Miss Daisy's Nursery, and Unique Fine Foods. The Gurkha Memorial Chapel is also located in the crypt.

The churchyard burial ground was cleared at the end of the nineteenth century to form a public park. This important green space is managed by the local council and contains a playground, astroturf, toilets and gardens.



## Christ Church

Christ Church is a Grade II listed building, designed by Edward Blore and consecrated on 26th June 1839. Later alterations include an extension of the altar area and a new west end window and vestry rooms. It has galleries on the north and south sides. It has a side chapel on the north side and a clergy's vestry room on the south side. It can seat a maximum of 300.

Christ Church's organ was built by the Dutch firm Flentrop in 2009 and incorporates elements of the original organ's pipework and casing.

There are two rooms attached to the southeast side of the building, with two toilets and a kitchen. These rooms have previously been hired out by nurseries but are currently vacant.

Two beautiful gardens on the north and south sides of the church are maintained by dedicated volunteers who have won several awards for their efforts.



### St Luke's Hall

St Luke's Hall was built in the 1950s on the site of the former St Luke's school, which was bombed in the Blitz. It is let to a nursery during weekdays in term times and during the weekend and school holidays it is used for bookings such as children's parties. It is regularly used in the evening for self-help groups and uniformed groups. Also attached to the hall are two flats, one of which is occupied by the curate and the other is commercially let.



## Hall of Remembrance and The Hut

Christ Church's Hall was built as a memorial following the First World War by a group of committed Christ Church congregation members. It is let to Hill House School during the week, and it is a popular venue for children's parties on the weekend. It has a garden space and commercial grade kitchen. Attached to the side of the hall is The Hut, a purpose-built new building which is used by self-help groups and after school classes for ballet, yoga and drama.

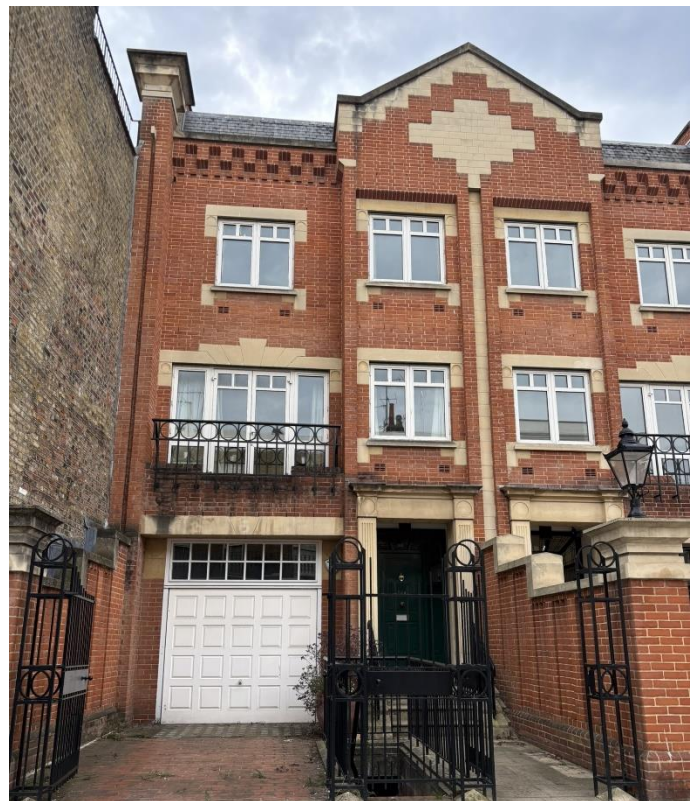


## The Rectory,

The rectory is conveniently located a short walk to both churches and Christ Church School. It is a terraced, five floor, five-bedroom property of approximately 4,200 ft<sup>2</sup>. It has off-street parking and a private garden.

## Other Clergy Accommodation

The Associate Vicar lives in a four-bedroom house close to St Luke's and the curate occupies a two-bedroom flat beside the St Luke's Hall.



# Appendix 1 History

*This is an adapted version of the interpretation panels in the narthex of St Luke's and two information pamphlets available in each of the churches.*

## **Chelsea Parish History**

Chelsea was originally a small riverside village outside London until a population boom in the 1700s. The baptisms jumped from 16 per year in the 1630s to 158 in the 1780s. St Luke's church was built for this growing population in 1824 but soon it was necessary to add another church in the area. In 1839, Christ Church was built as a chapel of ease and then became an independent parish in 1860. It rejoined St Luke's as a single parish in 1986.

In the 1700s and 1800s, parish churches in England were responsible for the things we now expect of local councils like collecting taxes, educating children, and maintaining roads and water pipes. The Chelsea parish had an open vestry (meaning local parishioners could vote at meetings) that oversaw local services including a workhouse, which provided food and shelter to the poor in exchange for work. A portion of the original 1737 workhouse building still stands on Sydney Street.

Since the 1600s, most rectors in Chelsea have been keenly supportive of education. The parish had one of the first free elementary schools in London (first mention of this school is 1585). Today, education for local children remains central, with Christ Church (Church of England) Primary School being a treasured part of the parish community.

The church today prioritises local mission through its foodbank, youth outreach programmes, and support of homelessness charities. This enthusiasm for local mission is longstanding - from the 1600s, Chelsea parish congregation members made charitable donations specifically for the care of the poor and these proceeds are still used today through the Chelsea Non-Ecclesiastical Fund.

Music has always been central to the worshipping life of our parish and St Luke's has had a particularly high calibre of musical talent. John Goss, who wrote the hymn 'Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven', was an organist at St Luke's. John Ireland, who wrote the tune of 'My Song is Love Unknown', was a choirmaster. Today, St Luke's choir is known as one of the finest voluntary choirs in London.

## **History of St Luke's**

St Luke's was designed by the architect James Savage as the new parish church of Chelsea to replace Chelsea Old Church, which, at a capacity of 450, had become too small for the area's growing population. Building began in 1820, and the church was consecrated on St Luke's Day, 18<sup>th</sup> October 1824. It was built to accommodate up to 2,500 people and cost £39,000 – a considerable figure at a time when churches could be built for £5,000.

Grade 1-listed, St Luke's is one of London's first neo-Gothic churches. It is made of Bath stone with a 142-foot-high tower and a 60-foot-high nave – the latter being the tallest of any of London's parish churches. A network of crypts (now converted into offices) strengthen the building's foundations, as it is set in sandy ground. The church's 10 bells were cast by Thomas Mears of Whitechapel in 1823.

Inside the church are several important pieces of art. The painting above the altar is *The Descent from the Cross* (1823) by James Northcote, a famous portraitist. Above the altar is a magnificent stained-glass window (1959) by Hugh Easton; the original window was damaged in the Second World War. In 1997, the stone sculptures of Adam and Eve by Steven Cox were added on either side of the altar.

St Luke's contains a number of special places for remembrance. The chapel to the south of the altar is a memorial for the 2nd Punjab Infantry of the British Indian Army. There is a memorial chapel for the 3rd Gurkha Rifles in the crypt. At the entrance to the church there are memorials to units that fought in the First and Second World Wars.

### **St Luke's Famous Historic Connections**

- The Victorian novelist Charles Dickens married Catherine Hogarth here in 1836.
- The Duke of Wellington laid the church's foundation stone. His brother, the Hon and Revd Gerald Valerian Wellesley, was the first rector of St Luke's.
- The church cemetery was turned into public gardens in the 1880s by the first British female landscape designer, Fanny Wilkinson.

### **History of Christ Church**

The church was originally intended to cater for the needs of the local working-class population, whilst their wealthy employers attended the much grander and slightly older St Luke's Church nearby in Sydney Street. The church was designed by Edward Blore and built with funds provided by the Hyndman Trust, the Hyndman family having originally made their money in the West Indies, where they owned extensive sugar plantations. The church was consecrated in 1839 and is a plain, well-proportioned Early Victorian brick structure, with a simple rectilinear plan, with nave, north and south aisles and galleries above.

Soon after its consecration, Christ Church established its own school. To begin with, premises were rented in Flood Street and the school was for boys only, but by 1843 new schools for boys and girls were erected on land donated by Lord Cadogan, directly opposite the church. The school still exists as a Church of England Primary School.

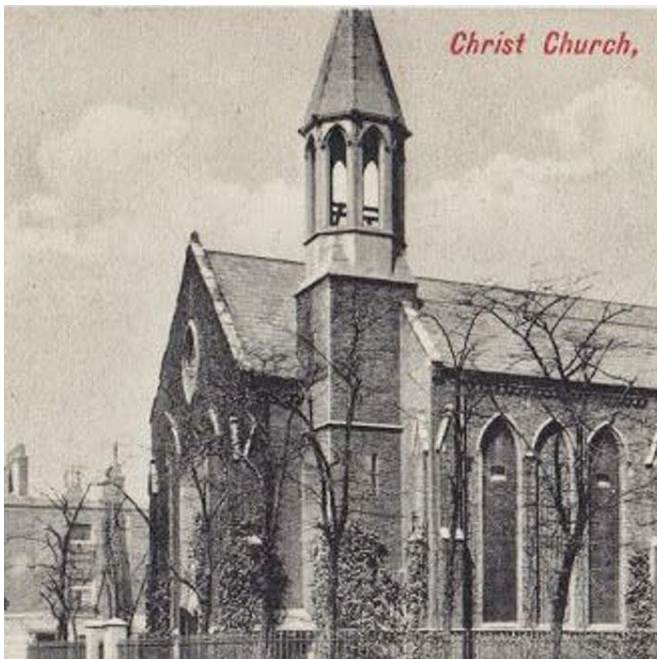
In 1898, Christ Church was extended with a new altar area and vestry rooms under J Arthur Reeve. This was followed in 1900 by further improvements at the west end by W D Caroe. In 1933, G G Woodward's North West Porch was added.

The church's pulpit is of carved oak with a design characteristic of Grinling Gibbons' work. Along with the organ, it was transported to Christ Church from St Michael's Greenhithe around 1876 following its demolition to make room for Queen Victoria Street. The organ has subsequently been rebuilt but retains some of the original pipework and casing.

There are only a few memorials inside the church. On the carved panels behind the choir stalls is a memorial to neighbours who were victims of the Blitz.

### **Christ Church's Famous Connections**

- Sir Albert Edward Alexander Napier (1881-1973), a solicitor and civil servant known as the "midwife to civil legal aid" for his role in introducing legal aid in the UK.
- Sheridan Russell (1900-1991), cellist, hospital social worker and Britain's first male almoner, founded the charity Paintings in Hospitals.
- Randall Thomas Davidson (1848-1930), longest serving Archbishop of Canterbury who retired in the parish and attended Christ Church in his final years.



## Appendix 2 Charities & Other Responsibilities

The incumbent of Chelsea Parish is ex officio trustee of a number of charitable trusts with historic links to the parish. The Rector is supported in this important part of their role by the Parish Office, which manages these charities operations and finances, although they are entirely independent of the PCC's own finances. Of particular note is the Chelsea Non-Ecclesiastical Fund (charity no. 236063)

The incumbent is ex officio Governor of the Christ Church & Holy Trinity Primary School Federation. As a founding church, the incumbent of Chelsea Parish is a member of the Glass Door Homeless Charity with voting rights for Christ Church and St Luke's at the Charity's AGM in the Autumn. A good understanding of the governance role and responsibilities is therefore needed by the Rector.

## Appendix 3 Parish Boundaries

### BOUNDARIES OF THE PARISH OF ST. LUKE'S & CHRIST CHURCH

For historical reasons the parish is defined geographically as follows:

Commencing at the point where the boundary of the Royal Hospital meets Chelsea Embankment, west along to Cheyne Walk, north up Chelsea Manor Street (the houses on the east side only of Chelsea Manor Street are in the parish i.e. odd numbers only), west along Chelsea Manor Gardens behind the Town Hall, north on the west side of the of the Town Hall into the Kings Road (even numbers only are in the parish), west to Bramerton Street, south down Bramerton Street (even numbers only), west across the south side of the Old Chelsea Rectory garden into Old Church Street, north up Old Church Street (only those houses on the east side of this part of Old Church Street are in the parish i.e. even numbers from 54 upwards), east along the Fulham Road (odd numbers only 239 to 291), south down Draycott Avenue (only the houses on the west side of Draycott Avenue are included i.e. odd numbers only), west into Bray Place, south into Blacklands Terrace, west along the King's Road, south into Cheltenham Terrace, west into

St Leonard's Terrace, south into Ormonde Gate, on Into West Road and along the boundary of the Royal Hospital to the Chelsea Embankment. Although the Royal Hospital is not technically in the parish it is included as far as education is concerned. Children of staff resident at the Royal Hospital are eligible therefore, under this category.

