

St Faith's Church Lee-on-the-Solent



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Our New Parish Priest

The church of St Faith in Lee-on-the-Solent plays a crucial role in the life of this small coastal town. We have a strong relationship with the community and it is our aim that those links will be further strengthened. Our desire is that our church will, increasingly, represent God's living presence in the life of the town. We want to develop as a more inclusive parish church, welcoming and involving people of all ages, backgrounds and varieties of Christian expression and belief. We want to continue to offer good and inclusive worship, aiming to meet the different needs of the Body of Christ and to strengthen Christian witness within our town.

Our Priest-in-Charge will:

- ❖ have a strong sense of calling to lead God's people in all aspects of spiritual and community life and will challenge us to develop in discipleship, spirituality and outreach.
- ❖ hold an understanding of the Gospel which is considered and inclusive and, through a sound preaching and teaching ministry, be able to interpret its relevance to contemporary life and society.
- ❖ have developed leadership, interpersonal and communication skills with an ability to identify and relate to the needs of a large and busy parish.
- ❖ be at ease with Eucharist centred worship but also help us explore worship styles which would provide for the needs of those unfamiliar with Christian faith and practice.
- ❖ have vision and courage to instigate change in all aspects of worship, spiritual development and ministry.
- ❖ be a pastor who will respond to the various needs of the parish, who welcomes all who come for baptism, marriage and funeral services and sees these contacts as an opportunity to offer a pastoral response.
- ❖ see ministry as collaborative and seek to nurture and develop the gifts of all believers.
- ❖ work to strengthen existing links with schools and local community groups seeing him/herself as "chaplain" to Lee-on-the-Solent, representing the love of Christ in all aspects of community life.
- ❖ play a full part in the life and work of the Deanery.

St Faith's Church

The church, together with the vicarage and the parish centre, is situated in the centre of Victoria Square, in the western part of Lee-on-the –Solent, close to the town centre. Surrounded by a pleasant open area and car park, it is in an established residential area, close to the sea front. St Faith's was consecrated in 1933 to replace a mission church established by the Parish of Crofton in the 1880s. The 'new' church, designed by architects Seeley and Paget, was a response to the increasing population in Lee. Since then it has been served by seven incumbents and has been considered a good training parish. The footprint of the building was significantly changed with the addition of the Lowry Room in 1979 and the Parish Centre, in 1999. A detailed history of St Faith's is available on the church website www.stfaithslee.org.

In terms of church history 80 years is not a long period of time, but this fine building represents an important aspect of community life and development. The church is not just the work of architects and builders, but represents the faith and labour of hardworking parishioners who have been committed to maintaining the church as a place of worship and a meeting place for the community for generations past and future. In collaboration with the other churches in Lee, the Methodist, Roman Catholic and Community churches, St Faith's serves a rapidly growing population of over 10,000 people.



The parish of Lee is one of eight parishes in the Gosport Deanery. St Faith's has played a full part in Deanery development with clergy attending weekly Chapter meetings and annual conferences. St Faith's usually hosts the Deanery Evening Service on Advent Sunday, which brings together choirs and congregations from the other churches. Recently the Deanery has been exploring the idea of being a Mission Area with each of the parishes being Mission Communities. **As a Mission Community in Lee, the priorities that we have identified for ourselves are:**

Transforming Worship

To work hard at offering good and inclusive worship every Sunday, aiming to meet the different needs of those who share in our services.

To develop further our special services that will appeal to children and young families.

To develop opportunities that will enable everyone to grow in their faith.

Building a Better Community

To continue our work with organisations and groups within Lee, such as the Residents, Community and Business Associations, the schools and health centres, as partners in building a better community.

Stewardship of Resources

To make the best use of our resources so that they can be used to their full potential in serving God, in deepening our prayer life and in our work with the community.

Lee-on-the-Solent

Lee-on-the-Solent is a pleasant seaside town which faces the Solent with views of the Isle of Wight. The town is within Gosport Borough, close to Portsmouth and about twelve miles from Southampton. There is a shingle beach and an extensive promenade stretching two miles along the foreshore, with the open spaces of Daedalus Airfield , Lee Golf Course and the Alver Valley Country Park.

There are four distinct areas in Lee, each with characteristics which reflect building development. West Lee, where St Faith's Church is located, was developed as a seaside resort in the 1890s and early 1900s. The pleasant Edwardian villas still exist but there has been a considerable amount of residential infill and the housing on the sea front has been developed as apartments. Elmore, towards the east of Lee, was originally developed at the same time as the west end, but with a higher density of housing. The Fell Drive-Twyford Drive estate was built in the 1970s and included the Lee Community Centre. The Cherque Farm estate to the north east of Lee is a recent addition of about 1000 houses and apartments.



Lee's total population is over 10,000 with 4,750 dwellings. The distribution of young and old is by no means uniform and data from the 2010 Census shows some marked contrasts. Just over 40% of the population lives in the more established areas of NW and SE Lee, including the sea front and shopping area, and has a higher proportion of couples whose families have grown up and left home. Almost 60% of the population lives in the more recent developments of Fell Drive/Twyford Drive and Cherque Farm, attracting younger people with young families who form the majority of residents.

The main schools are Lee Infant and Lee Junior, which are very popular, with a number of pre-school nursery facilities. Most secondary children attend Bay House School in Gosport and some attend Crofton School in neighbouring Stubbington. Post 16 education is provided at Bay House School which has a sixth form, with Further Education opportunities at Fareham College and St Vincent College in Gosport.

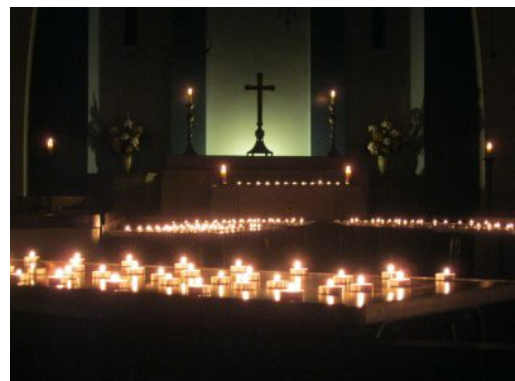
Lee Community Centre, together with St Faith's Church and the Methodist Church, offers a wide range of community activities. Lee Tennis Club has facilities for tennis, squash, and a gym. Lee Sailing Club caters for enthusiastic dinghy sailors and Elmore Fishing Club provides facilities for those interested in longshore and small boat fishing. A large recreation ground in the middle of the town has football pitches, public tennis courts, a bowling club and scout hut.

The town is very well provided with shops, pubs, restaurants and cafes. The shop owners of Lee are supportive of the church and community events and also provide a focus of social exchange within the town. There is a large medical centre, with eight doctors, while dental care is catered for by two dental practices. There are a number of care homes and rest homes for the elderly and the infirm.

HMS Daedalus was an airfield and aircraft maintenance training centre for the Royal Navy until its closure in 1996. The airfield has remained in use for light aircraft, recreational gliding and air sea rescue helicopters, but the main industrial area has stood more or less vacant for the last 15 years. Recently, it has been declared a major redevelopment industrial site. £31 million of development money has been made available and Brit Norman, the light aircraft manufacturers of Islander aircraft have already moved in. It is planned that an engineering apprenticeship training centre will be opened by 2014. It is hoped to develop 3000 new jobs on the site, mostly in aircraft and marine engineering.

Worship and Liturgy

The normal pattern of Sunday services begins at 8am with said Holy Communion (BCP) attended by 30 to 40 people. At 10am is the Parish Eucharist (Common Worship), with a congregation of between 130 and 160, which is followed by refreshments in the Parish Centre. Baptisms are held at 12 noon (33 in 2012), although families are very welcome to have a Service of Baptism in the Parish Eucharist. Evening Prayer is at 6pm when those attending (between 15 and 20) join together in the choir stalls. We have become accustomed to not having an evening service at St Faith's when there is a Deanery



Service elsewhere, or when a trip is arranged to other places of worship such as the Cathedral.

On a number of Sundays during the year, such as Mothering Sunday, Palm Sunday, Harvest Festival, and the Sunday before Christmas, we have a non-Eucharistic service at 10am, designed for families with younger children. In October we held our first Animal Service to which we welcomed dogs, cats, hamsters, guinea pigs and a tortoise, plus about 75 people.

Like most churches, our style of worship has evolved over many years. It is Eucharist centred with vestments, a robed choir, servers and Gospel procession, yet it is also inclusive, with people of every age, background, orientation and faith welcomed and included. **Making our worship as accessible as possible is an issue we continue to explore.** We are comfortable with extraneous noise when young children are with us, and we are very pleased to welcome and involve adults with learning difficulties as members of our church family. A regular opportunity for healing prayers is offered as part of the Eucharist, for those who wish, at 10am in the Lady Chapel.

The average age of our congregation is too high to be comfortable with, even though we have a crèche at the 10am service and a well organised Junior Church in term time. Our music is led by a choir of 12 loyal members and our long serving organist, with the Kyries or Gloria, Sanctus, Benedictus and Agnus Dei all sung at the Parish Eucharist. **Some members of the church would like to see more variety in the music at our services.** All readings, including the Gospel, are read by lay people, who also prepare and lead the Intercessions, and we have teams of chalice assistants and sidespeople. St Faith's values good preaching, and in this sense is liberal in tradition. In recent years we have benefitted not only from clergy, both retired and from other churches, but also from members of the congregation, who are experienced preachers, who share in the preaching rota.

A midweek Eucharist takes place on Thursday mornings, and the Daily Offices, said morning and evening on weekdays, are at the foundation of church life. At Morning Prayer those present not only say the Office but also pray for those to be baptised and married, the sick, departed and bereaved as well as all of the activities happening in the Church and Parish Centre that day. At Evening Prayer those present pray for all Churches dedicated to St Faith throughout England. At Morning and Evening Prayer each person on the Electoral Roll is also remembered twice during the course of a month.

An average of 20 Weddings, 5 Blessings and 30 Funerals take place at St Faith's each year. These are an important aspect of our ministry to the local community, providing contact with local families, through preparation for weddings and baptisms, and providing support for the bereaved.

Children and Young People

Junior Church (JC) meets every Sunday during term time. There is a wide age range of children from 3–10 and the number of children attending varies from about 5-13.

JC uses Scripture Union materials as a basis for each session; this includes an icebreaker, some appropriate teaching and other activities related to the session. Once a month a purely fun session is held involving outside games/cooking etc.

There are a few special services during the year, where children are particularly involved such as a Nativity service, two Crib Services - which attract 750 children and adults - and on Mothering Sunday we recently invited the local school choir to sing.

The challenge for the church is to make the services more appealing to families so we can develop our regular mission with children.

'Flipside' is a youth club aimed at 10-16 year olds which is jointly run by Lee Community Church and St Faith's. On average about 7 young people attend each week and we have a dedicated team of about 5 other helpers who come along. 'Flipside' operates a drop in system whereby the young people can come and go as they please between 7pm and 9pm but must sign in and out. The first session is free then a weekly fee of 50p is charged to cover costs. Activities include table tennis and a Wii. Once a year a trip to Soul Survivor is organised and a vigil/sleepover is held on Maundy Thursday.

Schools

The Vicar of St Faith's fostered relationships with a number of local schools and colleges, and for many years he served on various governing bodies, most recently at Lee Junior School where he was chair of governors. Close links with both Primary schools have been maintained, with the vicar paying weekly visits to take assemblies, and the children making regular visits to our church for Christmas, Easter, Harvest and the Year 6 leavers' service, and for curricular work.



The Head teachers of the Junior and Infant schools have expressed their wish that our new Parish Priest continues to strengthen links with their schools, work with the children, consider governorship and promote church visits for the children.

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Pastoral Care

Though we see a Priest-in-Charge as having the major role in pastoral care, we also see it as a shared responsibility. The vacancy has given opportunity to many others to participate in caring for the worshipping community and beyond. Our Pastoral Care Group represents a range of pastoral skills, many coming from professional experience in health and social services. Visiting the housebound, the sick and bereaved and responding to personal crises and the administering of Holy Communion in the homes of individuals and in local residential homes, provides the main focus of our activities.



We are committed to a policy of safeguarding and all who undertake pastoral activities are CRB checked.

The weekly 'Cuppa and Company' meeting is a development of pastoral ministry providing a place of fellowship for those experiencing loss and the need for adjustment resulting from such losses. This is attended by about thirty people.

Our vision is for a pastoral ethos within St Faith's in which we each recognise a responsibility toward the development of a caring and inclusive community.

Spiritual Development

St Faith's values thoughtful preaching as a basis for reflection on the application of Christian faith and values for everyday living, but sees the need for this to be extended in less formal ways. Occasionally small groups meet for study and prayer. Lent groups have sometimes been held within our church community and at other times we have participated in ecumenical and Deanery groups.

We acknowledge a need for more provision of opportunities for teaching and discussion to introduce newcomers to the faith, to encourage believers in the development of their experience of God and to consider the various approaches to prayer

Church Groups and Community Activities

Regular groups at St Faith's include:

The Friends of St Faith's: A group of people who contribute a minimum of £1 per month to 'The Friends' which was set up to help the church care for its land and buildings so that they remain in good condition for future generations. As well as contributing to maintain the fabric they have an annual outing to places such as Petworth Parish Church and House.

Bumps and Babes: This group provides an opportunity for both expectant mothers and those with babies to enjoy fellowship and support.



Rainbow Toddlers: Originally set up by the church and still subsidised, this weekly session provides a time for parents to bring their children for friendship and play.

Church Choir: The church choir which meets twice a week for practice, leads the congregation in the sung parts of the 10am Eucharist during which an anthem is sung. It joins with other choirs in the Deanery for special services.



Mothers Union: Each meeting has a short service led by our branch leader. Speakers on all types of subjects are invited including some from our own church and others from around the area. The MU is fully involved in church life, such as members helping out at Bumps and Babes, with a chance to chat and make friends with the mothers and babies.

Knit and Natter: A group very well described by its title and open to all. What they produce is given to charities which include the women's refuge, the homeless and the local hospital premature baby unit. Recently blankets were sent to refugees in Kosovo.



Community Events: There are number of events throughout the year, whose primary object is to engage with the community but also to provide much needed funds for the church. The two major events are the Summer Fete and Christmas Fayre.



Both are very significant occasions in the life of the church and community and draw large numbers of people. Our traditional style Summer Fete fully uses the church green with silver bands, dancers, bouncy castle plus numerous stalls and side shows run by church and community. The Christmas Fayre, again with a huge variety of stalls, plus a Christmas Grotto, provides opportunities for purchasing Christmas gifts.

The **Community Committee** plans a diary of events two years in advance, which includes table top sales, quiz evenings, skittles evening, fashion shows, spring craft fayre and plenty of events involving food whether it be bangers and mash or Harvest supper. Each event will in some way involve those from outside the church community. In 2012 a Diamond Jubilee Dinner for 140 people was a great success.

St Faith's Parish Centre: The Parish Centre has become a significant place for a range of community activities with a number of groups meeting on a weekly basis. These include:- Bereavement Group, Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance, Keep Fit, Zumba Gold, Lee Singers, Lowry Girls Choir, Lunch Club, Pilates, Toddler Group, Yoga, Art Class, Bobbin Lace, Bridge Club, Brownies, Line Dancing, Dancers School of Dance, Meditation Class.



'ICANGO' Minibuses: ICANGO is a Lee-on-the-Solent registered charity working to provide community transport for local people. Working in partnership with St Faith's Church and Gosport Voluntary Action, it operates three minibuses which are kept in the Church car park. This provides a useful extension to the ministry of St Faith's church, bringing people to the 10am service every Sunday.



Charitable Giving: The church is involved in raising funds and awareness for various charities including US Projects (formerly USPG), Traidcraft, Farmers Crises Network, and collecting food for homeless people in our locality. We subsidise some charitable community groups who use the Parish Centre.

Buildings and Land

St Faith's Church was built in 1933 and has a Grade II* listing. Many people entering the church remark on its modern appearance and the distinctive catenary arches which give a feeling of space, whilst the three levels of Crittall windows enhance the white painted walls. The Lady Chapel is a place for daily prayer and quiet reflection. In 2005 a new gas heating system was installed with wall radiators providing a good level of heating. The organ, installed in 1936, has a 2 manual extension and was rebuilt in 2006 at cost of £60,000; it is used for weekly services and occasional concerts.

The last Quinquennial report highlighted areas which required attention, most of which have been dealt with by an active Fabric Committee. However, like any other 80 year old building, there are areas of repair providing us with challenges to tackle. In 1999 the top row of windows was replaced but it has become apparent that the remaining two levels will need to be replaced before tackling the much needed internal redecoration. A donation has been made to provide an internal glass partition inside the West door, to provide a view of the interior of the church to those walking past. **Under consideration is also the possible re-ordering of the church to allow for more flexible forms of worship.**

The Parish Centre, completed in 1999, incorporates the Lowry Room, built in 1979, which had proved inadequate for the needs of a growing church. The new facilities provided are a larger hall, which can seat up to 150 people, with a spacious kitchen and toilets. Together these facilities provide a much needed resource for the church and the community. **Currently, a group is reviewing the future development of the centre, to capitalise on the facilities and to ensure that its future is sound in usage, finance and upkeep.**



The church green is an ideal setting for the annual Summer Fete, with stalls and various forms of entertainment making the most of the pleasant surroundings. A Garden of Remembrance was set out in 2000. There is no burial ground in Lee, so this provides an area for the interment of cremated remains. It is an important place in the parish where people can remember loved ones.

The former Vicarage has major structural problems, and the Diocese is currently seeking permission for it to be demolished and replaced with a modern, purpose-built Vicarage on the same site in Victoria Square. Therefore a newly appointed Priest-in-Charge will be asked to move into alternative accommodation for the first year or so, as close to the church as possible.

Staffing, Administration and Finance

At present the church has one licensed Reader, and is fortunate in being able to call upon the services of a number of retired clergy who live locally. A part-time Church Administrator (contracted for 16 hours per week), assisted by volunteers, works from the Parish Office which is open each weekday morning. The Parish Centre is managed by the Parish Centre Management Committee, and in order to keep the centre in good condition it employs a caretaker and 2 cleaners.

The **Parochial Church Council** meets every 2 months, with the Standing Committee meeting one week prior to the PCC to prepare the agenda. Based on an Electoral Roll of 250, the PCC consists of the Vicar, Reader, 2 Churchwardens, 12 lay members, together with our Deanery Synod representatives. The PCC is served by the following committees, receiving regular reports on their activities:

Finance Committee which meets every other month to review the church finances and to support the Parish Treasurer.

Fabric Committee which deals with the maintenance and repair of church buildings and matters of health and safety.

Children and Young People Committee which meets to oversee and develop our work with children and young people. The Safeguarding Officer is a member of this committee.

Community Committee which organises a programme of social events and activities to build links with the wider community.

Parish Centre Management Committee which meets every other month.

Finance

Within our Stewardship Scheme, many in our congregation contribute regularly through monthly standing order or by weekly envelopes, while others prefer to use Gift Aid envelopes. In 2013 our Diocesan Parish Share is £87,129. In recent years we have managed to pay this in full, though we have not found it easy to balance the Annual Budget, and occasionally we have had to use some of our reserves to do so. Careful management of our funds by the Treasurer, with planned reductions in expenditure in some areas, has helped us to budget more effectively. Major fundraising events, such as the Summer Fete and Christmas Fayre, have been important in meeting our financial commitments.

Summary of Accounts for Year ended 31st December 2012

Total of Unrestricted Incoming Resources £ 138,288
(*Not including unclaimed Gift Aid for 2012: Approx £10,000*)

Total of Unrestricted Resources Expended £ 147,343

Unrestricted Funds £84,673

From the Area Dean

The Deanery of Gosport

The Deanery Clergy Chapter meets weekly for the Office at 11.45am and then has lunch together, finishing by 1pm. Each church in the deanery acts as host on a rotational basis, with the first Wednesday being a Eucharist. Members of Chapter give this a high priority. In addition, there is an annual 3/4-day (Residential) Conference, a Quiet Day and 2 Chapter Days.

During vacancies and holidays, deanery clergy assist where able. Funerals in parishes are offered to the incumbent first and then to deanery clergy and licensed lay ministers. Patronal Festivals and Feasts are Deanery events, at which all parishes are well represented.

The Deanery Mission & Pastoral Committee is always looking at ways in which the deanery can be resourced well by its clergy and lay ministers and is working on the basis that parochial boundaries are 'softer' than before and that each member of Chapter is willing and keen to work throughout the deanery (for example, there is a policy of cross-boundary baptisms). Creative use of personal and ministerial gifts is made, but the focus remains the mission community to which the Bishop licenses a priest. All SSMs are licensed to the Area Dean and they are placed within the area of greatest need.

The Chapter is seen as a place of support and friendship. Diverse opinions are respected as we work towards being totally inclusive and collaborative as a mission-focused deanery.

The deanery shares its boundaries with the local government borough and comprises 8 parishes:

- **Alverstoke**, St Mary, St Faith (Tribe Road) and St Francis :
Revd Andy Norris
Assts: Revd Phil Hiscock,
Revd Nicky-Sue Terry (Title SSM)
Revd Reg Forse (SSM)
- **Bridgemary**, St Matthew: Mthr Karen Mitchell (held in Plurality with Elson)
Bridgemary School Chaplain
- **Elson**, St Thomas : (see above)
- **Forton**, St John Evangelist: Mthr Carrie Thompson
St Vincent's College Chaplain
- **Gosport**, Holy Trinity: Fr Andy Davis (held in Plurality with Christ Church)
Fr Peter Lambert (Title SSM)
- **Gosport**, Christ Church : (see above)
- **Lee-on-the-Solent**, St Faith : (vacant)

- **Rowner, St Mary the Virgin** Fr John Draper (also Area Dean)
Deanery Priests (SSM) Mthr Margaret Hay,
Fr Brian Williams,
Mthr Sue West
Deanery Pastoral Assistant (vacant) Area Dean's support

Sector Chaplaincies exist as follows:

HMS Sultan: Revd Simon Horne RN

Immigration Removal Centre: Revd Nicky Startin

War Memorial Hospital : Revd James Hair,
Revd Colin Prestidge