

RECOVERING THE VOICE

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Issue 1 Winter 2020



HERE FOR YOU

Our vision

To be formed into a warm, authentic and growing community of Christian people seeking to live and share their faith for real at the heart of the city of Portsmouth.

To become a church with visible connection and meaning to those who live, work or study in this community: one that is open throughout the week for everyone, whether you express a faith or not.

To offer a safe place of genuine welcome, creativity and surprise where the transforming love found in Jesus Christ is experienced and embraced.

St Luke's Southsea is a community of ordinary people exploring life together. Everyone is welcome and accepted. Our primary mission focus is to build relationships.



Values

	<p>We are joining in with God's mission here not imposing our agenda on Him.</p>		<p>We want to build relationships with people not do things to people.</p>
<p>We want to make a positive and lasting difference in our community.</p>		<p>We love diversity and having fun: "a bag of liquorice allsorts!"</p>	
	<p>We don't have all the answers but are learners (disciples) together.</p>		<p>We believe trying something new and learning from mistakes is a good thing.</p>
<p>We want worship to be accessible and meaningful: simple but not superficial.</p>		<p>We believe Spirit, Word and Sacrament are of equal importance in worship.</p>	
	<p>We believe God's kingdom grows in us and among us.</p>		<p>Prayer is central to all we do and will become.</p>

History of St Luke's Church

St Luke's Church was completed in 1861 and consecrated in 1864. It was squeezed in (running north to south) between a biscuit factory on the east side and a terrace of small houses on the west in this crowded working class district. When the church was built the area was known as Marylebone, today the area is known as Somerstown.

The parish of St Luke and St Peter is located at the heart of the city close to Portsmouth and Southsea station and the Guildhall.

St Luke's is one of the most ethnically diverse parishes in the diocese. The current population on the parish is 14,000.

Charter Academy formerly (St Luke's Church of England Secondary School) was founded in 1864. It was originally a Sunday school. In 1865 a permanent building opened to educate the local community. Much of the surrounding area was significantly bombed during the war but the school and church remain.

The building was designed by Thomas Hellyer following a competition. The design - nave, aisles, apse and a 'west' gallery - have references to Norman style but interior is fairly plain. There are dormer windows which take the place of the clerestory. The church is built with bricks but the exterior is of flint with stone dressings. The interior is a five bay arcade of red and yellow brick columns with scalloped capitals. The aisles have plasterwork with some modern wainscoting added on the 'north' and 'south' walls.

The church contains an apsed sanctuary with large text boards and a ceiled semi-dome. The church is little changed since it was built except that some of the pews have been removed and the west gallery has been changed to accommodate an organ. The building is theologically built in an evangelical style with an emphasis on preaching and mission. This is shown by the relatively plain interior and installation of the text boards.

In addition to the dormer windows, light comes from nine windows in the 'north' aisle, ten in the 'south' aisle and three more in the apse.

St Luke's Church was reopened after five years of closure and neglect. Portsmouth Pathway is now based on site. The congregation is growing and find new ways of engaging with the community who live, work or study in this area. The church building now has temporary heating and essential winter works have been carried out to prevent further damage to the external structure. However the dark, inflexible and poor state of the current building hinders rather than helps the work of mission and ministry in this challenging and diverse urban context.

In February 2012 the PCCs of St Luke and St Peter agreed to the unification of the two parishes to become one benefice on 1 Feb 2013. Throughout 2012 the joint PCCs considered several options for the redevelopment of the churches.





“It just feels like home.”

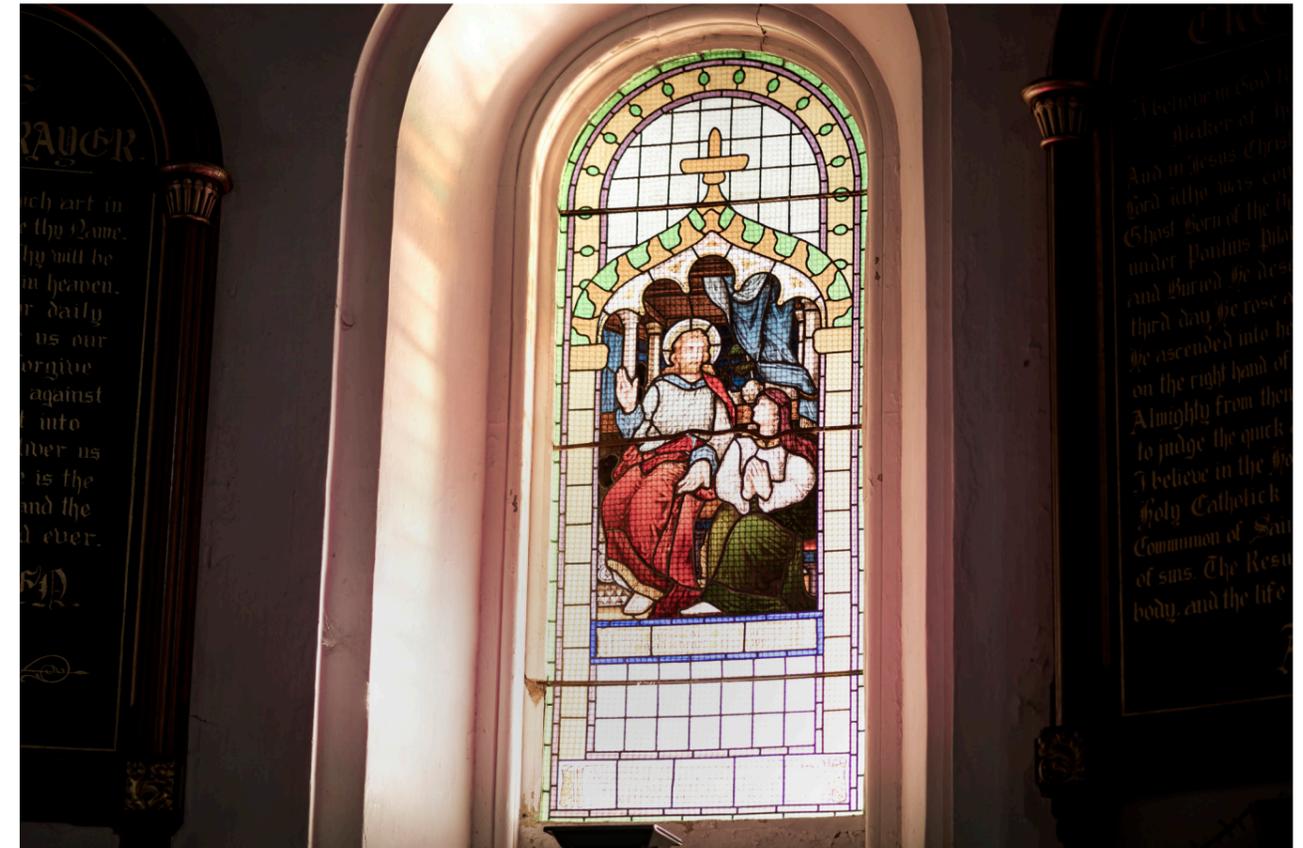
- Joseph, Portsmouth

The Story of Mary & Martha

The story of Mary and Martha Magdalene is depicted in the stained glass window at St Luke's. It is written in the Gospel of Luke.

Jesus and his disciples were passing through a village when a woman named Martha invited them into her home. Martha had a sister called Mary, who sat at Jesus' feet and listened to what he had to say. Martha was distracted by the serving that needed to be done. Martha went to Jesus and said "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her to help me." Jesus replied and said "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about lots of things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen that part which shall not be taken away from her." (Luke 10:38-42).

The meaning behind the story of Mary and Martha is focussing our awareness on the word of God. The story reflects how we respond to the teachings of God in our own lives. We should focus on giving our full attention when we are in the presence of God or reading his teachings today. Mary chose to listen to the teachings of Jesus instead of helping her sister Martha with the preparations. The response from Jesus was that only "one thing" is needed which was to focus on him.



"Few things are needed - or indeed only one." - Luke 10:42





Organ

1867, made by Alfred Hunter. Hunter was a distinguished organ builder who worked in and around London. From 17 local organs only this one remains.

This (and one other destroyed in WW2) were the largest new organs he made until the 1890s, and was thus a milestone in the firm's output. It contains a Swell 16ft Trombone - a stop extremely rare in 19th century Hunter organs.

Further work was undertaken in 1902 and an electric blower added in the 1950/60s.



Side Altar

Victorian altar table with gothic carvings. Three Victorian chairs, gothic style with arms.

Chancel furnishings

The liturgical furniture is modern and of solid light oak. These pieces were made as a suite, by a local craftsman, a former boat builder who is a member of the church.

Pulpit

Pulpit with five stairs, plaque 1897 to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.



Text Boards

Evangelical style text boards:

- The 10 Commandments
- The Creed
- The Lord's Prayer

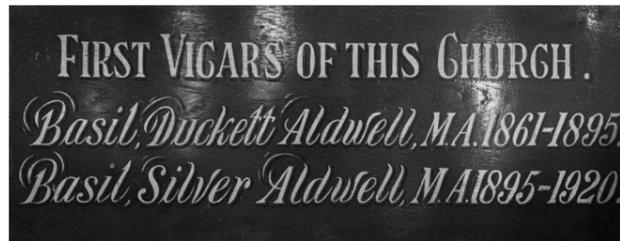


Legacy of the Aldwells

The first Vicar Basil Aldwell established evangelical tradition and had a firm belief in mission. He believed not only in preaching the gospel but also in the fight against poverty. He undertook a number of initiatives in this deprived parish. These included a soup kitchen, youth group, industrial society and education throughout the local school. This work was continued on by his son. A memorial plaque is installed in commemoration.

Aldwell was an Irish Protestant interested in education. When he died the parish schools could accommodate 1,000 children. Aldwell established other organisations including: a Sick and Indigent Visiting Society for the relief of the poor, a tract association, societies for young men and women, branches of Band of Hope and Scripture Union, an industrial association and a mother's meeting. Basil Aldwell was succeeded as vicar of St Luke's church by his son. Even after this the church focussed on Evangelicalism.

The church is important in understanding the 19th Century industrialisation of the local area and need for the rapid development of new churches. The interior of the church shows the influence of John Wesley and the evangelical movement on church design. The church site is important to understanding the social history of the area. The church had a role in promoting social change in an area of deprivation being involved with the local school, a local mission and other social outreach schemes.



Photograph by: Messers J, Russell & Sons, Chichester and Southsea.

Reverend Annie McCabe

The current Priest in Charge, Rev Annie McCabe came to St Luke's in May 2015 with a background in community engagement and a strong sense of calling to the inner city.

Prior to her arrival, the church was shut for more than six years. Now it is a growing community of ordinary people exploring life together. A church with visible connection and meaning to those who live, work or study in this community: one that is open throughout the week for everyone, whether you express a faith or not. It offers a safe inclusive place of genuine welcome, creativity and surprise where the transforming love found in Jesus Christ is experienced and embraced.

Prayer is central to the life of St Luke's now. The changes to the layout of the space within the church stem from the Biblical idea of God as host. The radical hospitality of God who welcomes us all home. The "return of the prodigals" can be found in an image in the church.

Like the first vicar of St Luke's, Rev Annie shares a passion for mission and concern for those who live in one of the poorest parishes in the country. Integral to her approach is to build relationships with not to do things to people.

The majority of those living in the parish are young families and young adults. Building trust again has been a crucial part of Rev Annie's ministry through listening to the community and responding to their needs. As a result, a number of initiatives have been started. These include the creation of the Bridgeway Project, Rubies and The Host Co-working space for young adults as well as Tots in Tow, Community Café, Chatty Church and Holiday Food and Fun serving young families and those who find themselves isolated or in material need.

The vision to re-imagine St Luke's for the 21st Century includes an imaginative and ambitious redevelopment of the church and the site that surrounds it. The church is currently on the National Churches at Risk Register and in need of change. Doing nothing is not an option. Rev Annie's prayer is to provide a lasting legacy of hope for those who come after us. A building that better serves the local community and speaks in practical ways of the God who loves this part of the City.



Events

- Sunday Service
- Family Communion
- Chatty Church
- Weddings
- Baptisms
- Christenings
- Funerals
- Thanksgiving
- Remembrance
- Nativity
- Christingle
- Easter
- Fayres



Community Groups

- Spinnaker speakers
- Batala Samba Drummers
- Top Bananas Circus Skills
- Pathway training for future vicars
- Funk Format Dance hip hop group
- UVG- Urban Vocal Group choir
- White Crane Martial Arts
- Community Gardeners
- YMCA
- Narcotics Anonymous
- Bridgeway for people aged between 14-22 struggling with a problem or issue.
- Messy Church create crafts and make things with your children.
- Tots in Tow pre-school playgroup
- Rubies



Who we are







**“You just walk
in and you
feel safe.”**

- Lorraine, Portsmouth



Lorraine's Story

God has spent my entire life prompting me. Taps on the shoulder here and there along the way. Life gets busy and I perhaps haven't always listened. But, He never gives up, so I have, at times, strayed away only to be brought back. It's not that I was avoiding Him. Life just got in the way.

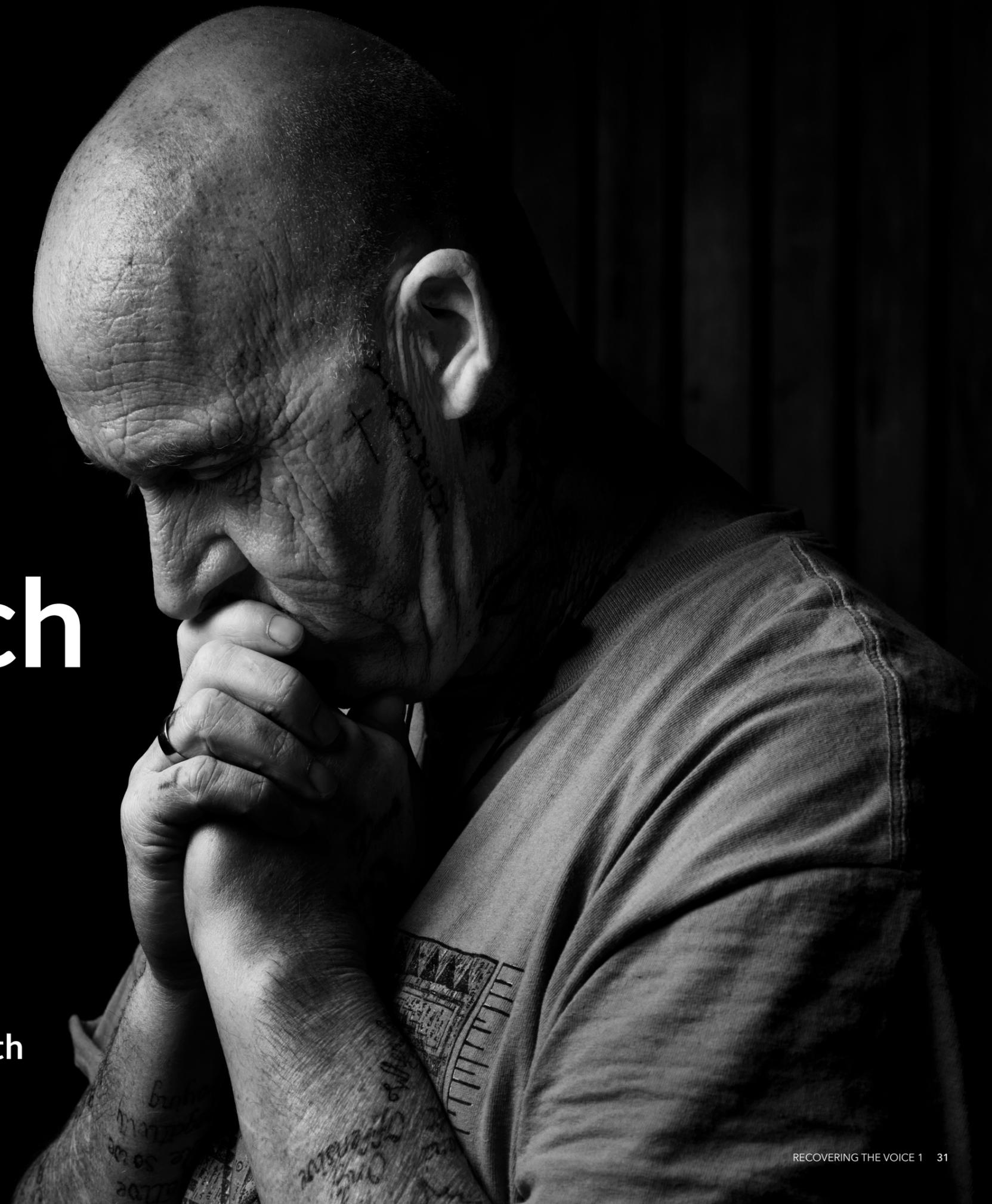
Because of time commitments I've always had to live my life at full speed. There have been very few times that I've had the time to stop and listen, stop and reflect, and that's happening now. This is a new phase.

Here, I can share in God's love. You just walk in and you feel safe. When I'm feeling vulnerable, sad, or happy, there's always somebody to share that with. It's a safe place, and there are times when I've really needed to draw on that. People respond, without hesitation.



**“I came to St.
Lukes in search
of the family I
never had.”**

- Finn, Portsmouth

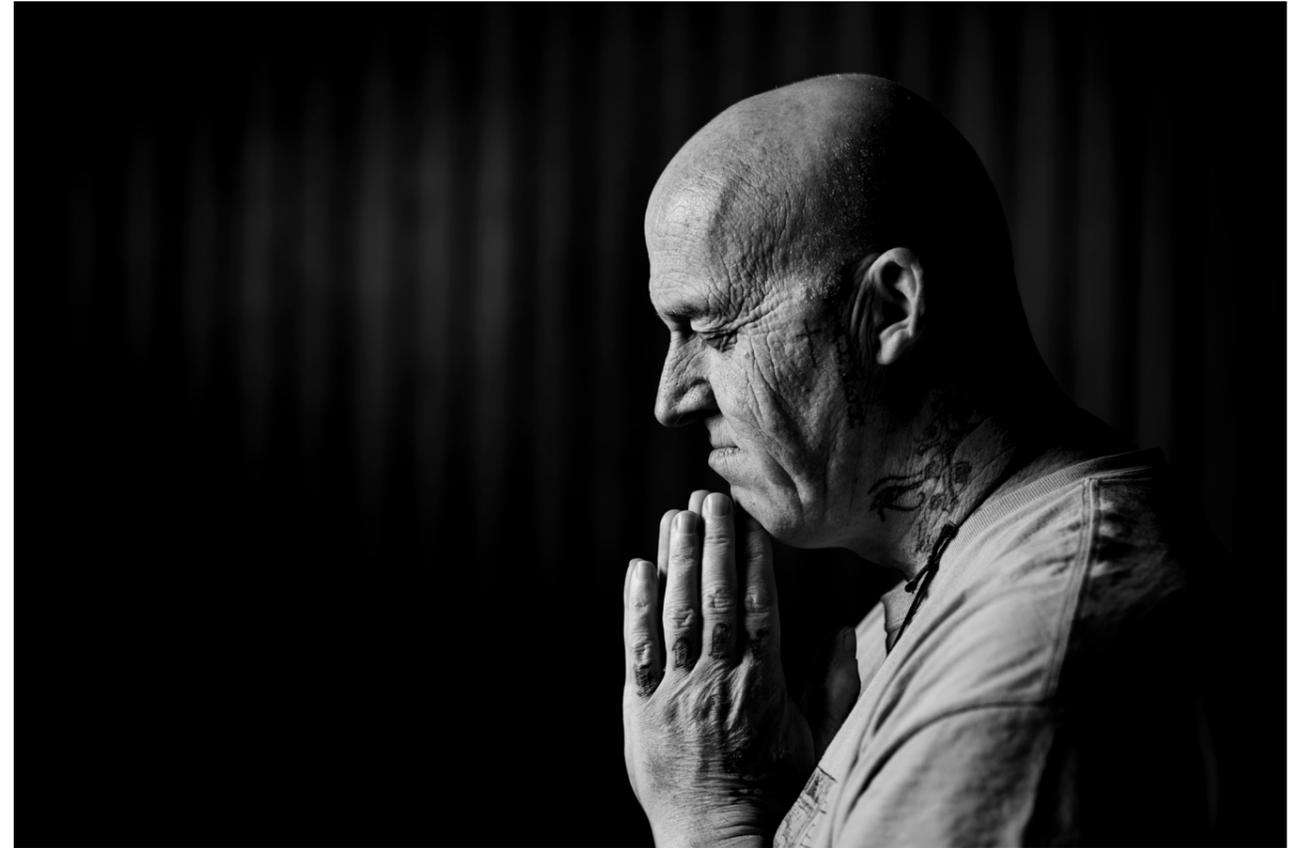


Finn's Story

I came to St Luke's in search of the family I never had. I feel close to God here and that began to grow in me. I stopped feeling alone and disconnected and began to be part of a church family for the first time. At Pentecost last year I was baptised.

My life has changed since I became a Christian. I am much calmer and more patient. Inside me I have new peace, purpose and hope.

Jesus found me. When I walked into St Luke's for the first time, I heard the story of the lost sheep. That was me. God showed me His light and love before I knew His name.





I like being
part of
the team.”

- Emma, Portsmouth

Emma's Story

I first began attending St. Luke's in 2015 after leaving my job at Tesco. My Sundays were now free to attend church. I wanted to provide my children with the same background that I had as a child.

As a mother of three barriers would crop up from time to time. Depression. Not wanting to get out of bed, and early Sunday mornings. No one likes to get up on a Sunday morning.

Four years later it's the sense of community, the feeling of belonging, and the family aspect of St. Luke's that keeps her here. I can be me. Actually. Truly. Me.

Emma understands the impact that the contribution of time can have on a community such as St. Luke's and so she gives generously. 'I do it because I enjoy being here. I love being part of the family.'

Given the opportunity to ask Jesus just one question, what would it be? 'Will I always struggle? Will it all be worth it? These moments, of being tested?'



A black and white close-up portrait of Reverend Bryan Stephenson. He is bald, has a slight smile, and is wearing a dark jacket. The background is dark and out of focus, showing some horizontal lines.

**“There is so
much
love and
acceptance
here.”**

- Reverend Bryan Stephenson, Portsmouth

Bryan's Story

I came to St. Luke's as an ordinand whilst studying on the Portsmouth Pathway. After ordination the Bishop of the Diocese of Portsmouth placed me here, at St. Luke's as a curate.

As a student, whilst training here, I also chose to come to St. Luke's as a parishioner because there is so much love and acceptance here.

Family is the best part of being here. And the ability to work in God's Kingdom. I am able to give of myself here, and be who I am.

Like many of us Bryan would call himself an 'ordinary' person, and so he wonders why God has chosen 'this fallible human being' to fill the place of priest.

Bryan has learned that Holy Spirit rests deep within us all. 'We just have to look for it. Ask for it. It's there.'



Recovering the voice

Doing nothing is not an option. Not only do we need to transform to be more representative of the changing context in which we are working, but the building itself requires significant improvement. St Luke's is identified on Historic England's national list of churches at risk. The last Quinquennial (2009) identified major concerns which required significant investment to maintain it let alone develop it to serve the community more effectively.

Rather than wait until the redeveloped building was completed before we began to engage with the local community, we have worked hard to build relationships of trust and involvement since the church was reopened. We are seeking to make our vision a reality.

The groups we have and continue to listen to are:

Current members of the congregation including those who have begun to worship at St Luke's since the church reopened.

Local residents who come to Messy Church, Tots in Tow; those who help care for the community garden and participate in the other Community Mission events offered at St Luke's.

Existing hall and church building users e.g. YMCA, Narcotics Anonymous.

Local community neighbours e.g. PATCH residents' association, The Foyer, Sure Start, the Somerstown Hub, Charter Academy, Cottage Grove School, Ark Ayrton School.

Young local entrepreneurs with businesses in the parish e.g. Asher Design, Bread Addiction.

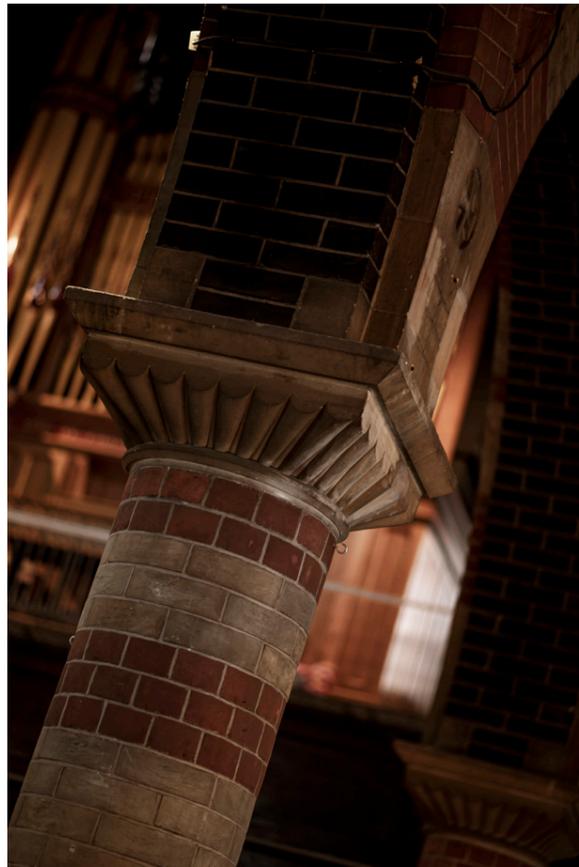
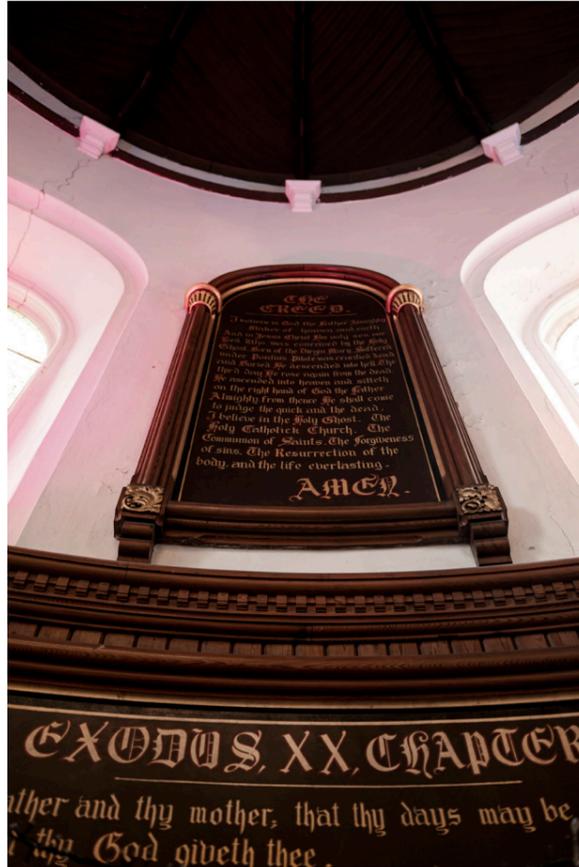
Social enterprises working within the parish e.g. Motiv8, Canvas Coffee.

The majority of those living in this parish are aged below 35 and it is the most ethnically diverse parish in the Diocese. A higher percentage than average in the Diocese would not identify themselves as Christian.

The social and demographic imperative for mission focuses us on building relationships of trust with young families and young adults recognising the diversity of life circumstances that may represent in this rapidly changing inner city context. It also requires us to think differently about the ways we use the church building to meaningfully engage with those who live, work and study in this context and offer radical hospitality.

The building itself, even in its neglected state still conveys to those who come into it a sense of the numinous: of permanence, rootedness and warmth. It is unlike any other in the area and this is frequently true of those under 35 who come into the building.





Summary

We want the church building to be a space so appealing/intriguing that those who pass by will want to come in. When they do, they find a space they connect with and choose to come back regularly.

Light, uncluttered, open and adaptable.

A place that continues to feel safe, permanent and special i.e. different to other buildings in the local area, but with a sense of home.

A fusion of old and new in the building that includes quirky/surprising elements without the imposition of fixtures or features that will easily date and cannot be undone.

Worship

A space that makes it clear that this is not about worship retreating to one end of the church!

Space to enable

Sunday and weekday worship in a variety of styles in a creative, flexible and inspiring space for groups ranging from 5 to 200.

Baptisms, weddings, funerals for groups ranging from 5 to 300.

Space for visitors, people from the local community and church family to light a candle, sit and pray or talk in confidence to the priest. This may need to be secluded in some way but still transparent. It needs to be beautiful, visually inspiring.

Young children and families to feel welcome and valued.

Disabled access

The worship team to practice and lead musical worship.

Everyone in the church space to see what is happening at the front i.e. effective placing of monitors/screens.

Neat and enough storage of worship band equipment, flower arranging materials, church supplies for services etc.

Chairs to be stacked and stored effectively and unobtrusively when necessary.



Performance space

A venue for live creative performances (music concerts, gigs, drama, storytelling, showing films etc.) with AV, lighting, sound, IT and performance space facilities to a standard suitable for professional hire.

A working and connecting space

Meeting/connecting space in relaxed and intriguing surroundings.

Co-worker space in the week for young creatives.

Study/homework space in the week for young adults.

Conference and public meetings space in the week.

Access to IT for those without it at home.

A space for hospitality

A café to serve up to 30 people used by all ages but with young adult "millennial" market particularly in mind. (Students, young creatives, night time economy, local families, passing trade)

Eclectic, non-corporate vibe i.e. not Costa/ Greggs but more like Canvas Coffee, All About Tea, Tubestation, Polzeath Church. Perhaps incorporating some churchy features e.g. pulpit, stain glass from St Luke's hall.

For those who want to enjoy the history/ heritage of the place.

Other requirements

Entrance that is appealing, intriguing and accessible with clear signage

Parish office to accommodate a team of up to 4 people

Letterbox

Flower preparation area

New vestry

Purpose of additional development

To generate positive sustainable income flows to support mission at St Luke's.

To provide facilities that will serve young adults and young families in the community in way that is congruent with our mission.



Reshaping St Luke's

Join us with the reshaping at St Luke's re-imagining the church for the 21st century.

Re-imagining the liturgical space at St Luke's

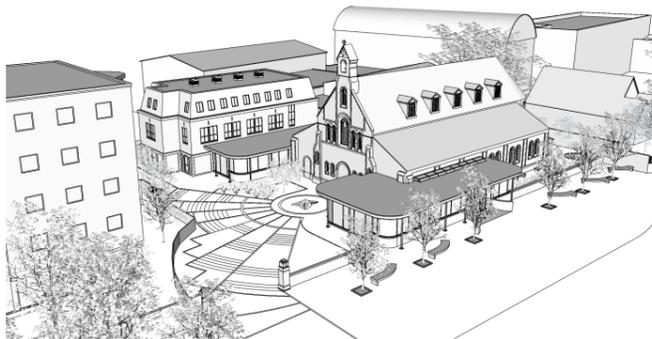
A liturgical place fit for purpose: one that is consistent with our vision and informed by the values that underpin the church's ministry in this pioneer parish. Our plans focus on changing the worship space from one that of a hierarchical "Victorian teaching room" to a place where the barriers to worship are removed, making clear that the way to God is open.

Simple but not superficial accessible liturgical layout that doesn't preclude the sense of the sacred; but rather seeks to offer something of the immanence and transcendence of the character of the God we worship, retaining the Eucharistic focus rather than "band and audience" style of gathering.

A place of worship that offers signals of the transcendent (Berger) to those who may initially come into the church space for other reasons e.g. those coming to church to be part of the co-worker community, those visiting from our three local schools, those coming to light a candle or step in from the café. Incarnational in a way that seeks to be true to the people who are living close by in the many high-rise blocks of social and student housing yet also conveying a sense of eternal, the sense of more, or other.

On arriving at St Luke's, we created a temporary space for quiet prayer, pastoral conversations. We used an existing table to offer the opportunity to light a candle, write in the prayer book, take a holding cross or simply be still.

It has become a luminous space well used by congregation and occasional visitors alike. It is also the focus for prayer in the week and prayer before and after our Sunday services. We want to retain the purpose of this sacred space but to make the look and feel of the space more cared for and inspiring. Currently, it is surrounded by crumbling walls and blinded windows.



"In fact, the kingdom of God is among you." - Luke 17:21

The Host coworking space

A unique and uplifting coworking community in a historic Portsmouth Church.

Our Values & Aims

Pioneer an authentic community

Champion courageous learning

Open doors to faith

Foster positive and lasting change

Offer value and useable space

Create a culture of sharing and shaping

Provide a healthy working environment

Accessible to all

More than just a place to work

Working alone doesn't have to be lonely working. We want to help combat isolation and foster new businesses in a positive environment.

By providing a utilisable space, a dynamic community and access to expert advice and support, we hope to resource and support professionals to succeed.

We've combined mid-century retro design with upcycled and bespoke furniture repurposed from the original pews to create our alternative to independent working.

Lone workers, entrepreneurs, small business owners, freelancers - you're so welcome.

What is in the space?

Large collaboration tables, comfy seating areas, coffee bar (with free tea & coffee) free WiFi, fridge access, inside a working church. P.S we do have heating and extra blankets.

Is it still a church?

Yes! We are inside a working church with a place to pray, sit and soak or just to take a minute; to refresh and focus yourself on what matters.

The users belonging to St Luke's stop and pray at 8:30am, 1pm and 4pm for 15 minutes or so. Feel free to join in at any point, and don't be afraid to make noise during this time.

This space is for you, as much as it is for anyone else. Make yourself at home, get comfortable and help yourself to tea and coffee.



Passes

Daily Pass

First day free by just walking in! Once you've bought 6 sessions, get your 7th FREE!

Only £7 a day!

- Access to high speed WiFi
- Unlimited speciality coffee and tea
- Use of collaborative breakout spaces
- Access to flexible space for meetings bring guests in for meetings for £1 only.
- Expert learning and development workshops
- Invited to regular community events
- Use of desk spaces as available
- Join a creative community of solo workers

Only £4 for half a day!

Buy at the door. Pop in, find a Host Curator, grab a coffee, be productive!

Monthly membership

Buy access to The Host for regular monthly usage only £56 per month!

- Unlimited speciality coffee and tea
- Access to high speed WiFi
- Use of desk spaces as available
- Use of collaborative breakout spaces
- Access to flexible space for meetings
- Use of The Host up to 5 days a week!

Pop in, find a Host curator, grab a hot coffee, and we will set you up! Pay in person.

...and more!

Student Membership

Buy our Student and Graduate Monthly Rate for only £40.

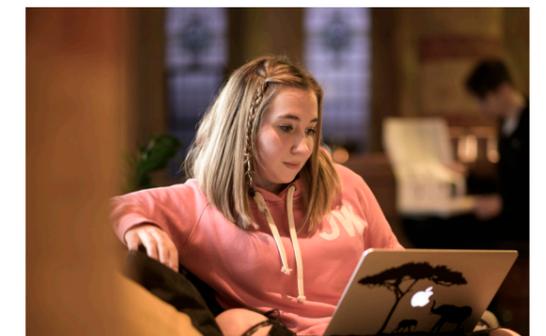
- Unlimited tea and specialty coffee
- Access to high speed WiFi
- Use of desk spaces as available
- Use of cosy collaborative breakout spaces
- Regular community events
- Expert learning and development workshops
- Use The Host up to 5 days a week!

Just pop in and we can set you up with a coffee, sofa and WiFi, what more do you need.

...and more!

Opening hours

Monday 10am -5pm
Tuesday - Thursday 9am - 5pm
Friday 9am - 4pm



Contact us



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The Host Coworking Space

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The Parochial Church Council
of the Ecclesiastical Parish
of St. Luke and St. Peter.
Charity No. 1178416

About the Designer



Bryony Rogers is a third year Graphic Design student at the University of Portsmouth. Bryony came to St Luke's to work on a project centred on recovering the lost voice of our Church, and to capture its history. She has done this brilliantly. Bryony's commitment to the story of St. Luke's has culminated in this beautiful publication. We are grateful to have had this opportunity to work with Bryony, and pray for all of her future successes.

Should you wish to work with Bryony, you can reach her at:
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Acknowledgments:

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