

Southsea St Margaret

PROFILE



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



Diocese
of **Portsmouth**
Jesus-centred, Kingdom-seeking



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BISHOP'S WELCOME

I am delighted you are seeking to discern whether Jesus is calling you to serve with His beautiful people in Southsea. Be assured of our prayers in the diocese for you and those you love as you step into a time of discerning.

The Diocese of Portsmouth is a community of communities focused and centred in Jesus, and seeking the Father's heart of love for the world. We shall be praying fervently for you as you discern your next step of faith in response to God's faithfulness.

With love, in Christ,

'As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.'

Colossians 3: 12-13

Jonathan Portsmouth



THE RT REV JONATHAN FROST,
BISHOP OF PORTSMOUTH



ARCHDEACON'S WELCOME

I wonder what people look for when they read a profile? What makes them consider that this is a ministry that God is calling them to? It is inevitable that the profile merely gives an insight, but can never present the full picture of the role being considered.

This is true of this profile for St Margaret's which as Archdeacon I have been working on with the Parish and PCC. I have been alongside St Margaret's over the last few years as first Area Dean and now Archdeacon and believe that this profile captures something of the spirit and life of the community I have met and worked with. Under the Pioneer Minister, who is in the process of moving on, there has been a transformation from a building closed for safety reasons and a dwindling congregation to what you read here. There is a desire to build on this ministry and growth and enable the community of St Margaret's to continue to be a place of life and joy as well as meeting the needs of the wider community. I am aware in conversations in the city that many in the local authority and other community groups hope to continue to work in partnership and maintain the strong links that have been established.

The next step on the journey of St Mag's is an important and exciting one, but will also be a challenging one as we seek to deepen and secure what has been developed, while continuing to reach out and draw others in. We look forward to exploring with applicants the opportunities that this presents, as well as some of the challenges to be faced



Bob White
Acting Archdeacon of Portsdown

WELCOME FROM THE CHURCHWARDENS



It is our absolute pleasure to welcome you to St Margaret's Community Church. St Margaret's is an 8-year-old church plant that has become established in the heart of the local community. Started by a lay pioneer minister with a small team, it has now grown to a weekly attendance of 100+ with a lively, active community presence. This has been achieved by making Jesus central, creating a collaborative team, encouraging growth and running frequent Alpha courses.

At St Mags we have seen significant growth as the church has been reborn for the local community. This involved creating an expectation to see Jesus at work amongst His people. We are a church that has grown out of the community and provides for the community.

The building has been developed to hold a cafe, charity shop, soft play area and food pantry. All of these draw local people into the building as well as providing income to support the work of the parish. We have strong links with local councillors and a positive reputation locally. When people come to St Margaret's they expect to hear about the transformation that Jesus brings.

The key challenge that the church faces is that it is still a relatively new Christian community. The next stage of our church life requires a leader who has vision and drive to embed the values that have helped the church to grow.

We are now looking for someone to lead us on the next stage of our journey. Someone who understands our DNA whilst having the vision to secure our future, consolidating and helping us grow pastorally and in depth spiritually.

This post offers a brilliant opportunity to come to a church that is active in outreach and seeking to follow our vision of:

‘Building Community with Jesus at the Centre’



VISION AND MISSION

Our vision is to play our part as; Jesus calls us to reach out into the community; loving the lost, bringing new life, seeing lives transformed, sharing our faith, hope and love. We are:

‘Building a Community with Jesus at the Centre’

At St Margaret’s, we are a welcoming, community-focused church, rooted in traditional evangelical theology. We align with the Evangelical Alliance and the Alliance group of Church of England churches. Our worship is informal and participatory, with many members of the congregation leading and taking part.

We aim to be a genuine community church, fully engaged with the people around us. Our congregation is diverse, with a wonderful mixture of socio-economic groups, backgrounds, and nationalities. We have a significant number of Iranian refugees and converts, and we warmly welcome Farsi speakers into our fellowship.





OUR MISSION IN ACTION

We live out our mission through:

- Serving our local community – We seek to be a blessing to our neighbours, demonstrating God's love in practical and meaningful ways. We remain flexible and responsive to changing needs, ready to adapt our approach.
- Building a real Christian community – We have many small groups, youth groups, and men's and women's groups that foster Christian love, encouragement, and growth.
- Helping people grow in faith – We celebrate full-immersion baptisms but rejoice more in seeing believers deepen in wisdom, maturity, and spiritual growth.
- Making prayer and worship central – These are the foundation of everything we do. Prayer groups meet at 7am on Tuesdays and Thursdays with around 12 people gathering each morning. A monthly 24 hours of prayer is organised through the 24/7 website. The worship group meets every week and encourages new members into their lively, inclusive group.



OUR MINISTRY AND OUTREACH

We actively serve the community through the following:

- Food Pantry – Providing essential support to individuals and families facing hardship. Well supported by a group of 35+ volunteers, generous donations of goods and finances as well as grants from the Household Support Fund.
- Community Café – A welcoming space for connection, hospitality, and outreach.
- Soft Play Area – A safe and enjoyable place for young children and their families. Each session ends with a child friendly worship song and prayer with an invitation to Sunday services.
- Charity Shop – providing recycled clothes, books, toys and ‘stuff’ at very low prices.
- Christmas Hampers of Hope – delivered to those in need across our part of the city.
- Adult Friendship Group, meeting twice a month, seeks to provide fellowship and bereavement support.
- Toddler Group, for toddlers and young families that meeting twice a month.
- Men’s & Women’s groups – providing fellowship, food, walks, fun and companionship with space for inspiring testimonies.
- Youth Groups – Meeting weekly with two age groups joining to share a communal meal together either before or after ministry, teaching and games.



We also have strong links with local schools and community organisations, ensuring we remain a source of hope, support, and spiritual renewal.

WE ARE LOOKING FOR A LEADER WHO ...



Has a heart for mission, with a desire to reach and disciple the unchurched.

Holds a strong evangelical faith, standing firm even in challenging times.

Will lead leaders, making it a priority to build up, strengthen and release all the leaders of groups and activities in the church.

Is an inspiring preacher and teacher, with a great love for God and a desire to explore and teach on the beauty and truth of his word.

Demonstrates through pastoral care, firm, patient, faithful wisdom and encouragement.

Is an ambassador, who can work flexibly with outside agencies, building bridges and appropriate partnerships.

Enables St Margarets to move on to the next chapter as it becomes an established, sustainable fruitful community.

OUR STORY

The previous worshipping community at St Margaret's came to an end in December 2015. In 2017 a team of 12 people from St Jude's, Southsea, planted an outreach congregation. The team attended the London Diocese' Church Planting Course. The initial planting team held several community open days, began a ministry for men, visited the local school, formed a parent & toddler group and launched a Sunday afternoon service based in the hall. By the end of 2017 St Margaret's received a visit from the bishop and the congregation had grown from 40 to 60 – holding successful Carol and Christmas morning services. Within 4 months, the congregation had filled the hall.



During Covid we opened a food bank which grew from a small cupboard to two shipping containers at the front of the building. This period embedded the church at the heart of the community, creating strong links with the local councillors and residents' associations.

At times our church life has been messy with challenging issues. But in our growth we have seen significant numbers of unchurched people come to encounter Jesus.



BUILDINGS

The Hall was already in good repair, and re-equipped and fit for use. However, the congregation couldn't grow to a sustainable size if confined to the hall. External funding allowed us to move the worshipping congregation so that it could reclaim its church building. The vision was that this building should be safe for public use, usable by a congregation and the general public, attractive for use and fit for purpose. Supported by significant external funding largely through SDF the building was reclaimed by becoming:

SAFE FOR PUBLIC USE

This included utility reinstatement, structural repairs, electrical repairs, plasterwork repairs.



ATTRACTIVE FOR PUBLIC USE

This included roof repairs, floor repairs, boiler reinstatement or replacement, radiator replacement, kitchen & toilets, mobility access, redecoration.

FIT FOR CONGREGATION USE

This included removal of old worship furniture, equipment and furnishings, addition of partitions, re-equipping worship and community spaces. The last building project completed in 2025 enabled the replacement of the roof to include solar panels.

INDEPENDENCE

A new PCC was set up ahead of the original time-line and the church quickly took control of its own finance, administration and governance.

CHURCH PLANTING

The DNA of this church plant includes that it should itself become a church planting congregation. A team who feel called to plant now meet to pray and plan for the future.



GOOD NEWS STORIES



Multiple Alpha courses are completed each year. The largest number attending one course was 65, attending during the morning service. Courses have been completed in Farsi, along with several Youth Alphas.

Thirty-five to forty people attend New Wine each summer, including young people. Several of these young people have given their lives to Christ and been baptised. Last year a total of thirty-two people were baptised.

Our youth group is now supported by a pool of eight adults, including young adults who are acting as good role models for our young people. Several teenagers who attend the group struggle to engage with education but are finding that our work with them has enabled them to have a greater understanding of themselves and how their behaviour and attitudes impact on those around them. These teenagers are now bringing others along to youth group each week.

A new worshipping community of Iranians join us for morning worship each week. They participate in life groups, volunteer and enhance our life as one community in Christ.

St Margaret's has developed a number of candidates for ordination, with two candidates having just completed their discernment process and starting training in the Autumn of 2025.

Our Food Pantry now supports 180+ members with regular weekly shoppers totalling more than 90 individuals/families. Our volunteer pool has increased in number, donations of food following appeals and harvest have increased, and financial donations and grants have given us confidence that this social enterprise is sustainable.

Our links with the local council have secured significant funding for both our soft play apparatus and our new roof including the solar panels.

A close-up photograph of a man with dark hair and a beard, smiling broadly. His face and dark t-shirt are wet with water, which is dripping down his chest. He is wearing a gold chain bracelet on his left wrist and a watch on his right wrist. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a church interior.

OUR STAFF

STAFF

- Philippa Dawson – Operations Manager, Parish Safeguarding Officer (PT)
- Kelly Cooper – Children's Ministry Team Leader (PT)
- Joe Doel – Youth Leader (PT)
- Francesca Sherren – Cafe, shop & soft play manager (PT)
- Jonathan Dawson – Pantry Coordinator (PT)

SUNDAY TEAM LEADERS

- Tracey Phillips – Worship Team Leader
- Alex Duncan – AV Team Leader



FINANCE

St Margaret's has been blessed by significant support from SDF (Strategic Development Fund), CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy, and other grants which have ensured that the building has been renovated to include underfloor heating, new kitchen & toilets, air source heat pumps and a soft play area built into a side aisle. We have just replaced the roof including 44 solar panels and have funding available to renew the lighting.

Regular giving through PGS (Parish Giving Scheme) continues to grow each year. This and other one-off donations have enabled us to pay our parish share, maintain the building and develop our mission and community outreach each year since the church opened as a new plant.

We are fortunate to be able to increase our income streams by letting the community hall and use of our cafe, charity shop and soft play area. We continue to develop these areas in order to support the community as well as ensure our financial stability.

Our pantry receives significant funding from the Household Support Fund as well as generous financial and physical donations from a wide range of other donors. This part of our community outreach is financially secure.





OUR CITY

Portsmouth is a vibrant port city located on the south coast of England, in Hampshire. It's known for its rich maritime history, naval heritage, and picturesque waterfront.

Portsmouth has been a significant naval port for centuries and is home to the Royal Navy. Famous ships like HMS Victory (the flagship of Admiral Lord Nelson at the Battle of Trafalgar), HMS Warrior and the Mary Rose are all docked in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. The City has a rich cultural life, with a variety of museums, galleries, and theatres. Historic architecture blends with modern development. Old Portsmouth area, with its charming streets overlooks the more contemporary Gunwharf Quays, a waterfront shopping and dining complex with a view of the iconic Spinnaker Tower.

EDUCATION AND INNOVATION

Portsmouth is home to the University of Portsmouth, a leading institution in the region, offering courses across a variety of disciplines. The city also focuses on innovation and technology, with several startups and research initiatives based here.

GREEN SPACES AND COASTLINE

Portsmouth offers beautiful views, especially from its coastal paths, beaches, and parks. The Southsea Common is a popular spot for outdoor activities, and the surrounding beaches offer a place to relax by the sea.

Portsmouth is a blend of rich history, modern life, and coastal charm, making it a unique city with a lot to offer both residents and visitors.

PARISH STATISTICS

	Baseline (2022)	2023		2024		2025
		Target	YTD	Target	YTD	Target
Total Average Weekly Attendance (AWA)	101	115	116	125	111	135
u16 AWA	13	20	29	30	31	35
Baptisms	21	10	17	12	32	15
Confirmations	2	1	13	1	0	2
Small Group Participation	35	45	48	55	45	60
Giving Income	£36K	£41K	£45K	£45K	£51K	£50K
Planned Givers	28	30	36	35	40	40
Amount per Planned Giver	£110	£120	£113	£120	£114	£130
% of Adult Attendees as Planned Givers	28%	25%	25%	25%	35%	30%



THE VICARAGE

Lovely 5-bedroomed house in arguably the best street in Portsmouth, 20 minutes walk from the church, 4 minutes walk from the beach, close to shops, restaurants and pubs – and only 20 minutes walk from Fratton Park Stadium. With 3 large reception rooms plus a kitchen/diner, this is a wonderful family home. In summer particularly, the west facing garden and first floor terrace come into their own, relax and watch the sun go down!



SAFEGUARDING



We take safeguarding very seriously at St Margaret's. We aim to provide a safe and caring environment for all we come into contact with, particularly children, young people and vulnerable adults. Please take the time to read our safeguarding statement at stmagscc.uk/safeguarding or [email](#) our safeguarding lead.

HOW TO APPLY



If you believe that God is calling you to join us at St Margaret's, helping us to play our part in the evangelization of Portsmouth and to extend our community with Jesus at the centre, we'd love to hear from you. Application details are available on the Diocese of Portsmouth website at portsmouth.anglican.org/jobs.

If you would like an informal conversation, please feel free to contact either of our Church wardens or Acting Archdeacon Rev Bob White via [email](#).

A photograph of a man being baptized in a church font. The man is smiling and has water on his face and hair. A person's hands are visible, pouring water over his head. The background is slightly blurred, showing the interior of a church.

INTRODUCTION TO THE DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH

The Diocese of Portsmouth stretches across south-east Hampshire and includes the whole of the Isle of Wight. It includes 133 parishes, from Botley in the west to Emsworth in the east, and from Blackmoor in the north to Ventnor on the south side of the Isle of Wight. It includes diverse communities, ranging from the densely populated and relatively deprived parts of inner-city Portsmouth, to rural villages in Hampshire; and from a range of seaside towns on the Isle of Wight to suburban communities west of Fareham and Gosport. In total, it covers 420 square miles and has a population of 784,000.

The Diocese of Portsmouth has 170 churches, ranging from historic listed buildings to brand new, purpose-built churches. There are around 150 clergy serving in those churches and their parishes, around 50 of whom are self-supporting. There are also around 70 licensed lay ministers who help with leading services and pastoral work. Around 13,500 people regularly worship in our churches, on Sundays and during the week. Attendance numbers have been declining over the past 10 years, but there are particular congregations that have grown. Only a tiny number of churches have been closed in recent years.

Parishes and chaplaincies within the diocese are supported by a small diocesan team, based in Peninsular House, Portsmouth. These officers support parishes and church schools, administer clergy housing and stipends, manage its property portfolio, promote social justice, handle communications, manage safeguarding procedures, and run a variety of training courses. The Diocesan Secretary oversees these staff. Separate teams of staff are employed in the bishop's office and for the three archdeacons. There is no suffragan bishop.

The diocese includes 44 Church of England schools in south-east Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. These are still mostly schools funded by the local authority, but the diocese supports them with regard to governance and admissions, building projects, Christian ethos, RE and recruitment of headteachers. The education team supports schools across both Portsmouth and Winchester dioceses, under the authority of a Joint Board of Education. Two schools on the Isle of Wight are joint Church of England/Roman Catholic schools.

Bishop Jonathan Frost was installed in March 2022, and has shared his vision for the diocese – a place where all are invited into a life-enhancing encounter with Jesus Christ. It should be a place where children, young people and young adults are given a particular priority; and where ministry to the elderly is supported by a network of Anna Chaplains, working in every locality. The vision is encapsulated by a vocational call to all Christians, which has been supported by strategic funding from the national Church of England to promote the planting of new congregations and a network of pioneer ministers. You can read more about our vision and vocation at portsmouth.anglican.org/our-strategy.



The Diocese of Portsmouth is one of the smallest dioceses in the Church of England, but has often “punched above its weight”, with senior staff and diocesan officers involved in the national Church, managing joint projects or implementing innovative ideas. Financially, the payment of parish share has always been good – but the recent Covid pandemic has resulted in some financial challenges.

There is a range of churchmanship across all traditions within the diocese, few parishes deliberately exclude themselves from deanery and diocesan initiatives, and our smaller, family feel means that most clergy and lay leaders know and respect each other.

a Rejuvenating community of Jesus-centred, Kingdom-seeking disciples



**Diocese
of Portsmouth**

Jesus-centred, Kingdom-seeking

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**THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND**