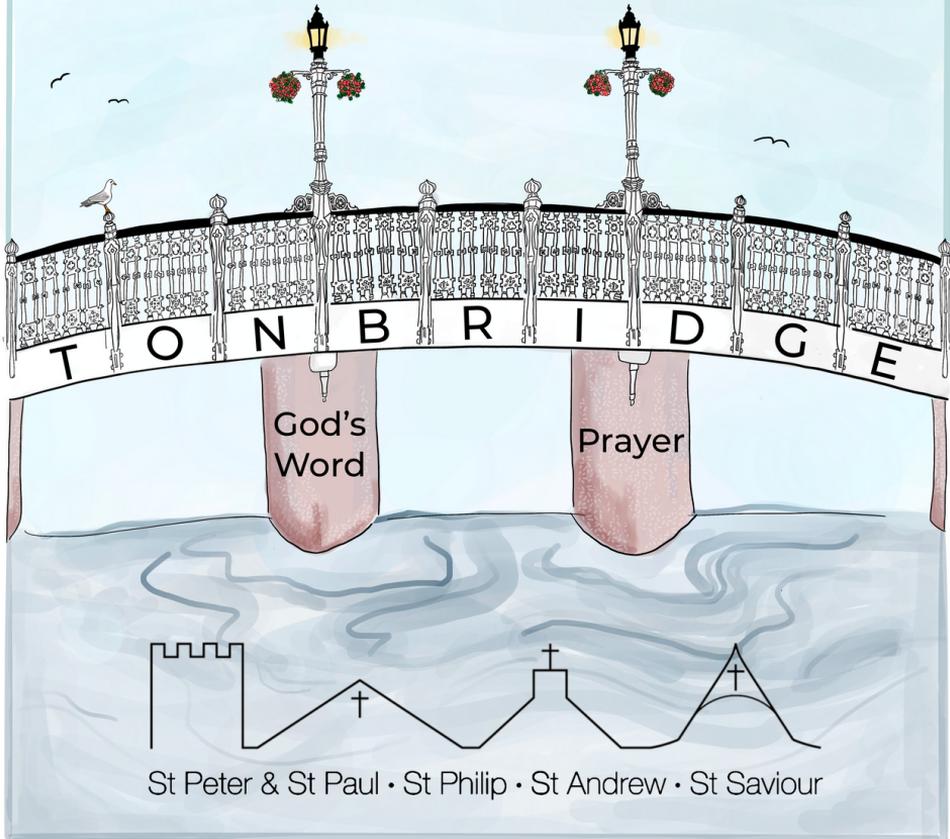


Living Jesus, Loving Tonbridge



St Peter & St Paul • St Philip • St Andrew • St Saviour

Tonbridge Parish Church – Vision 2022-2027

Living Jesus, Loving Tonbridge

T

TEACHING & DISCIPLINING
WITH GOD'S WORD

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TEACHING & DISCIPLING WITH GOD'S WORD

The word of God does the work of God by the power of the Holy Spirit – we grow as Christians as God's word transforms our lives:

- **Bible teaching** – work hard to teach the Bible faithfully for change in human hearts whenever we gather together. In particular through Sunday preaching that exalts Jesus and is well applied – encouraging us to live for Jesus in the rest of our lives. Training for preachers.
- **Home groups** – grow the number of people in home groups and develop new leaders. To include a clearer route into home groups, and regular leader training.
- **Personal Bible reading** – encourage church family to adopt their own patterns of (daily) Bible reading.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

O

OPPORTUNITIES TO SHOW LOVE PRACTICALLY

A genuine love for God necessarily works itself out in how we love and care for others – both inside and outside the church family:

- **Caring for our church family** – grow the ministry of hospitality to one another, especially opening our homes, and Hospitality Sundays. Facilitate practical care such as lifts and shopping; and sharing God's gifts together, for example, 'items wanted/available' list in the newsletter.
- **Using our buildings to serve others** – our churches as places people can increasingly go to for help, for example, form-filling, signposting, befriending, bereavement support and skills workshops. Also developing Open House, FEAST and coffee mornings.
- **Encouraging church family to serve in the local community** – identify where this is happening and commission people for that ministry.

James 2:17

"Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."

N

NETWORKING WITH OTHER CHURCHES

God has given our church(es) a particular ministry within our parish, but we are part of a wider Christian witness in our town, country and world:

- **Partnership in the parish** – build the unity of our four churches across one parish, whilst nurturing the individual contribution of each one to our ministry and mission. Share ideas and resources, and closer links between the church leadership teams.
- **Christian witness in our town** – find opportunities to work alongside other Gospel churches in the town, especially utilising the Tonbridge Area Churches Together (TACT) network.
- **Wider networks** – strengthen wider links, especially with Rochester Diocesan Evangelical Fellowship (RDEF) and the Church of England Evangelical Council (CEEC).

Romans 15:5-6

“May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

B

BEING ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL

Remove obstacles to enable the good news of God’s love and forgiveness in Jesus to be known as easily as possible amongst all who come to us:

- **Welcoming newcomers** – encourage church family to chat to those they don’t know on Sundays, build and train welcome teams at each church, re-work the welcome card, ‘name badge’ Sundays, newcomers’ Welcome Course and lunch.
- **Church buildings and services** – clear physical access and signage, including use of hearing loops. Words on screens clear, also explore Makaton for services. Host a simpler accessible service, for example, for those with dementia and their carers.
- **Communication** – more regular internal communication, for example, a weekly newsletter. Explore opportunities to increase external communication, including effective use of digital and social media.

Romans 15:7

“Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.”

R

RAISING UP LEADERS

All Christians have a role in discipling one another to help build the church – being disciple-making disciples. Some are raised up with particular leadership responsibilities to help us each live as disciples of the Lord Jesus:

- **Christian service** – enable people to serve within the local church. Speak up front about areas of need, encourage those keen to serve, offer training to serving teams.
- **Identifying leaders** – explore leadership pathways for potential leaders. Opportunities to test gifts of preaching or teaching God's word. Identify potential leaders in home groups, and rebuild children and young people teams.
- **Equipping leaders** – provide preacher training courses and promote external training opportunities. Mentor potential leaders, also for succession planning.

Ephesians 4:11-12

“So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.”

I

INSPIRED WORSHIP TOGETHER

The main reason Christians gather each Sunday is to encourage one another to keep trusting Jesus (and as we build one another up we also hope to see new believers built in):

- **Celebrate the variety** – celebrate the different styles of worship across each church, provide clear explanation to help people understand reasons behind different ways of worshipping. Opportunities to share personal testimonies of God's work in our lives.
- **Nurture the consistency** – Biblical teaching on what it means to worship God in ways that please and honour Him. Specific training for service leaders.
- **Build up AV & music resources** – pray for more people to join the technical teams, especially regarding digital provision. Explore a music training hub to draw in young musicians.

Psalms 95:6-7

“Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.”

D DEEP PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral care takes many forms, as Christians this is driven by a genuine concern for the spiritual well-being of others:

- **Equip and enable** – for every member ministry. To include training such as ‘Real Change’ courses (written by Biblical Counselling UK), giving people confidence to engage pastorally with one another. New church administration system to help people connect with each other across the churches.
- **Pastoral care team(s)** – publicise ways of accessing support with clearer routes to help. Make team(s) easily identifiable across churches and congregations. Ensure effective pastoral care and visits to the housebound and those where regular contact is naturally harder.
- **Prayer ministry** – reintroduce this after Sunday services in our churches.

John 15:12

“My command is this: love each other as I have loved you.”

G GOING OUT TO THE WORLD

Jesus expects His church to take the Gospel of God’s love and forgiveness in Him throughout the whole world. We have a part to play in that:

- **Mission Action Group** – raise awareness of world mission across the churches. To include ‘World Mission Sundays’ and regular mission updates. PCC review of how we can best support world mission financially.
- **Mission partners** – grow stronger personal links with mission partners, for example, Zoom interviews and build home group links with ‘adopted’ partners.
- **Involved in mission** – help all in the church family see that mission starts at home, in the workplace, and then spreads outwards. Encourage mission trips by members of the church family.

Matthew 10:7

“As you go, proclaim this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’”

E

EVERY WORD SPOKEN FOR JESUS

Only the Gospel transforms human hearts and lives, a message to be proclaimed to others:

- **Personal evangelism** – training on sharing our faith to talk naturally about Jesus in everyday life. Commission and equip people to share testimony of God's work in their places.
- **Church events** – build a calendar of events across the churches that give church family opportunity to invite non-Christians to come and hear the Gospel proclaimed. Regular Christianity Explored or Alpha, or similar course, to help people explore the Christian faith more.
- **In the town and world** – look for opportunities to be a presence in the town, especially at town events where we can engage with unbelievers about the Gospel. Use social media and digital ministry to reach beyond our church buildings.

Romans 10:14

“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?”

FOUNDATIONS - GOD'S WORD AND PRAYER

Our continued desire is that all we do in church family life is built on the life giving and enduring word of God in the Bible – a living word by the power of the Holy Spirit; and independent prayer to our Heavenly Father.

- **God's word** – look for every opportunity to bring God's word to bear on one another and the world. Engage expository preaching with contemporary issues of our time and place, so we are better equipped to live as Christians in God's world. Encourage all in the church family to grow in relationship with Jesus through daily Bible reading.
- **Prayer** – look for every opportunity to show our dependence on God in prayer – grow weekly church family prayers, establish a monthly evening prayer meeting, a prayer diary; celebrate answers to prayer publicly together, and pray with and for one another, for example, in prayer triplets. Encourage all in the church family to grow in relationship with Jesus through prayer.

Psalm 127:1

“Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain.”

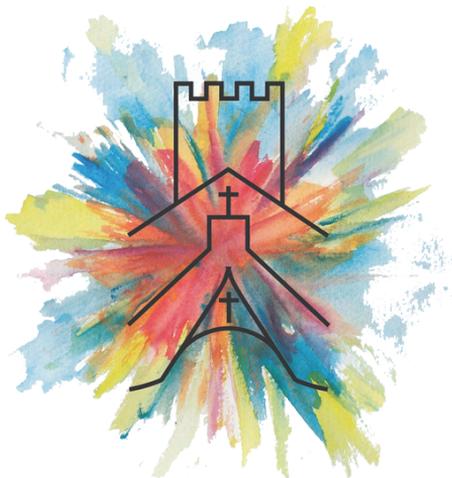
FRAMEWORK - SERVING JESUS WITH OUR GIFTS, FINANCES AND BUILDINGS

We want to encourage everyone in the church family to be actively involved serving Jesus, both for His glory and for our good and growth. We have some amazing buildings, dedicated volunteer and staff teams, and generous givers to help our ministry and mission. But we need to keep investing in the 'Framework' of our church family to best use all we have for Gospel growth in our parish, town and beyond.

- **Serving and gifts** – pray more about serving needs and opportunities, explore running a gift discovery course, build teams (not just individuals serving alone). Encourage church family to accept the call as 'whole life' disciples of Jesus. Do our best to safeguard all involved with our churches.
- **Finances** – regular financial updates, coordinated giving campaign and teaching on Christian giving, encourage legacy giving.
- **Buildings** – ongoing maintenance and decoration, ensure our buildings are safe, and secure our buildings and outside spaces to be most effective for parish ministry and mission.

Colossians 3:23

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord."



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