

The Parish Church of St Nicholas Buckland Valley 1947 A BRIEF HISTORY

The Buckland estate was built following the end of the Second World War straddled across the Buckland valley and consisted mostly of pre-fab dwellings. The conventional district of Buckland Valley was formed and Revd Edward Lucock appointed as the first parish priest in 1947, initially the congregation met at the vicarage in Dryden Road until a pre-fab church had been built. Later, the current brick church was built and dedicated in 1960.

For some years the old pre-fab building was used as the church hall until it was later demolished and the land sold off. Fitzwalter Court now stands on the former church site.

In 1974 the parish of Buckland Valley became part of the benefice of Buckland along with the parish of St Andrew's Buckland-in-Dover. The parish continued to have their own priest-in-charge until Fr Gary Gill moved to a new post in 1998.

The church building was internally re-ordered around 2005 to create a purpose-built space for a pre-school whilst retaining a dedicated worship space. The Umbrella nursery was based at the church for a short time until Kent County Council took over the lease to provide a base for the Buckland and Whitfield Sure Start Children's Centre.



Photos of the interior Photos of the interior prior to re-ordering

(below top: looking east; below bottom: looking west)



St Nicholas Clergy

1947	Edward Lucock
1952	James E. Cox
1959	Joseph H. Skepper
1964	Christopher J. Wayte
1960	Leonard G. Tyzack
1973	Jonathan V.H. Russell
1977	David L. Cawley
1984	Michael D. Hewitt
1990	Gary G. Gill
2003	Timothy Foreman (to 2013)

The congregation were mostly elderly and was dwindling in size until regular Sunday services were discontinued during the time of rector Fr Tim Foreman. The building continued to be used for occasional and midweek services as well as church meetings and social events.

In 2010 the two parishes joined to form a single parish benefice under the leadership of Fr Tim. The building continues to be home to the Children's Centre and to be used for meetings, events, courses and occasional services. Since 2011 Cross-Links have led a regular Messy Church in the building, initially on a Sunday afternoon, but now on a Friday

afternoon during term time. There is now a well-established worshipping community at 'St Nicks' (as it is affectionately known).

The local school often visits the church for activities and seasonal services. The local Cubs and Beavers sometimes visit the church to explore the faith as part of badge-work. The local Rainbow pack meets in the church.

Photos of the interior Photos of the interior after the re-ordering

(top photos show the worship area, the bottom photos show the Children's Centre 'creche' room)



Messy Church at St Nicks

