



**St Gabriel's Church, Kings Hill**  
Part of the Anglican Cluster of Churches  
with Mereworth, Offham, West Malling and West Peckham

Tuesday, 19 March 2013  
Our Ref: KHStG-130319

## **St Gabriel's gets off to a flying start**

Over 100 men, women and children gathered at the Discovery School on Sunday for the first service of the newly named St Gabriel's Church, the local Church of England congregation for Kings Hill.

Rt Rev James Langstaff, the Bishop of Rochester, was present to lead the service and, standing alongside local clergy, he inaugurated the use of the name St Gabriel's and blessed the church congregation as they took up residence in their new home of the Discovery School.

The Girls' Brigade and the Discovery School Choir also participated in the service by singing songs for the congregation and the centre-piece of the celebration was a naming ceremony for the church community after which a banner featuring a large angel was held aloft by the children.

The local community of Kings Hill had been invited to vote for their favourite name online and St Gabriel had been the overwhelming winner. Bishop James noted it was a particularly apt name for a community built on a former airfield!

It is unusual for an Anglican congregation to be named without having a church building, but Bishop James gave special permission for the community to choose an identity for the congregation. In inaugurating the use of their new name during the service, he said:

'May you be faithful to the Angel Gabriel's calling as a messenger of good news and a herald of the Lord Jesus Christ.'

After the service, there was lively discussion, refreshments and Girls' Brigade cupcakes enjoyed by all. St Gabriel's now meets every Sunday at 9:30 a.m. at the Discovery School, Discovery Drive, Kings Hill.

**ends**

### **Photographs**

KHStG001.jpg - Bishop James with children from the Girls Brigade holding the banner (parental permission cleared for children's faces to be shown).

KHStG002.jpg - The moment when Bishop James blessed St Gabriel's church with their new name in their new home.

### **Notes to editors**

1. Gabriel (meaning God is my strength) is often God's messenger bringing good news in the Bible to human beings. St Gabriel is mentioned just three times in the Bible and two of those appearances were used for the Bible readings in the service. The third mention of Gabriel (which wasn't used during the service) is probably the most famous from nativity plays the world over; Gabriel's appearance to Mary before the

birth of Jesus. He is also an important figure in the other Abrahamic faiths of Judaism and Islam.

2. Because Kings Hill, as a development, stretches across several ecclesiastical parish boundaries, it is handled as a shared responsibility between Patricia and Rev David Green (parishes of West Malling and Offham) and a third person who is yet to be appointed.
3. The church congregation meets each Sunday morning at 9.30 a.m. in the main hall of the Discovery School on Discovery Drive, Kings Hill.
4. More details of the church community can be found at [www.stgabrielskingshill.org.uk](http://www.stgabrielskingshill.org.uk).

**Contact:**

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