

Bury Baptist Church

114 Manchester Road, Bury.

An introduction and welcome



Welcome to Bury Baptist Church..... 3

Summary of our current regular activities 4

Further details about the regular activities 5

What kind of church are we? 6

What do we believe?..... 7

What are our practices? 8

How is the church administered?..... 10

Historical background..... 11

Welcome to Bury Baptist Church

This publication introduces Bury Baptist Church: who we are, what we believe, and what we do, along with some historical information. Although the information is presented for those unfamiliar with the church, the contents should also be useful to those already in relationship with us.

We are a welcoming and well established church on the southern outskirts of Bury, Lancashire. Our membership of around 100 includes many local Bury folk as well as being blessed with a diversity of people from other countries.

The building is situated on the A56 about 3/4 mile south of Bury town centre and comprises a converted bungalow behind which stands the main body of the church. The church is fitted with a loop system, has wheelchair access and a disabled persons' toilet.

Our Sunday services are at 11:00am and 6:30pm, but we also run a number of activities during the week.

We belong to the Baptist Union of Great Britain, and are linked with other Baptist churches within our North West Association. We have a good relationship with other denominations locally through Bury Churches Together.

**You are warmly invited to join with us - we
look forward to seeing you.**

For more information, call us on 0161 763 1091, visit our website www.burybaptist.org.uk , or send an email to secretary@burybaptist.org.uk .

Summary of our current regular activities

Sunday

11:00am	Service
6:30pm	Service (followed by tea & coffee)

Tuesday

1:45pm	Tuesday Club
7:45pm	Prayer Meeting

Wednesday

10:00am	Parents & Toddlers (Term-time only)
7:45pm	Bible Study (at the home of one of our members)

Thursday

2:00pm	Bible Study (at church)
7:45pm	Choir Practice

Friday

6:45-8:15pm	Pioneers: Youth (Term-time only)
-------------	----------------------------------

Please contact us if you are thinking of coming and would like to confirm a meeting is running. We may be able to help with transport for those with difficulty getting out.

The above indicates a typical week; it is subject to change and there are often other events in addition to those shown.

Further details about the regular activities

Services last about an hour and are usually led by our minister, though sometimes by a church member or a visiting speaker. Our worship involves the singing of both traditional hymns and newer worship songs, prayers, and Bible-teaching. We also have a choir and puppet team who sometimes take part. Most weeks during part of the morning service there is a Sunday School or crèche.

On some Sunday afternoons, after the morning service, the **Music Group** or **Puppet Team** stay for practice and fellowship.

Tuesday club encourages anyone at a loose end to come and meet in a relaxed and informal atmosphere for sharing together.

The **Prayer Meeting** is always prepared and led by the minister or a church member, but there are opportunities to share and intercede for one another, the work of the church, and the wider world. Come to participate or to quietly reflect.

The chairs are stacked away for **Parents & Toddlers**, the toys come out, and the toddlers usually get on with it, allowing parents time to chat together over a cuppa.

All ages and abilities are welcome at **Choir Practice**. We practice a variety of pieces, both traditional and modern, and get to perform them as part of Sunday worship.

Our Youth groups (**Pioneers**) on Friday nights are aimed at junior and high school kids, ages 5+. They usually involve a mix of fun activities, such as games and craft, and Christian teaching.

What kind of church are we?

We are a mainstream Christian church affiliated to the Baptist Union of Great Britain, and are in relationship with our regional North West Baptist Association.

As a local expression of a Baptist Church, it is the membership that agrees priorities and organises activities. These are mainly located at (but not restricted to) the premises we own on Manchester Road. They include our regular Sunday services of public worship which follow a mainly traditional format, with a healthy balance of old and new, appropriate for all ages.

The congregation includes a good mix of age, background, and nationalities. (As well as the UK, currently present are individuals originally from Burma, Eritrea, Hong Kong, India, Italy, New Zealand, Nigeria, South Africa, and Thailand.)

Visitors are welcome and we value any opportunities to get to know them better. The pastoral care of all those who regularly join with us is a priority, not just those in membership.

The current buildings are a converted bungalow linked to a significant extension in the former grounds of the property, constructed in the early 1970's. The main church area can accommodate a congregation of around 100, and is also used for several other weekly activities, usually with most of the seating stacked away. There are several other areas including a lecture room, front room, vestry, cloakroom, kitchen, and storage places such as the former garage. There is also some parking available in the grounds which can be reached from a side street. There are two entrances: a single door facing the main road, and double door at the side of the building which is the main entrance and should be used for wheelchair access to the main worship area.

What do we believe?

As a Member of the Baptist Union we subscribe to the Union's Declaration of Principle:

“That our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, is the sole and absolute authority in all matters pertaining to faith and practice, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and that each church has liberty, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to interpret and administer His laws.

That Christian Baptism is the immersion in water into the name of the Father, the Son and Holy Ghost, of those who have professed repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ who ‘died for our sins according to the Scriptures; was buried, and rose again on the third day’

That it is the duty of every disciple to bear personal witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to take part in the evangelisation of the world.”

In addition to the above, the Doctrines believed and promoted by Bury Baptist Church are:

- **The Trinity of the Godhead**
- **The Deity of Christ**
- **The Divine authority and inspiration of Holy Scripture**
- **The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit**
- **The universal sinfulness of fallen man**
- **The substitutionary atonement of Christ's death on the cross**
- **Eternal salvation through personal faith in Christ**
- **Resurrection of Christ and all believers**
- **Coming again of Christ in glory**
- **The universal Church as the Body of Christ of which He is the head**
- **The local Church as a place of worship and fellowship**
- **Everlasting Life**
- **Eternal Kingdom of God**

What are our practices?

Worship

Regular acts of worship, prayer, and Bible-based teaching of the Christian faith are our main public practices.

Communion

Communion is usually shared twice a month and the Deacons normally bring the bread and wine to the congregation. Participation at the Communion of the Lord's Supper is a privilege and a priority; all present at the service are invited, on profession of faith, to share in this act of witness and fellowship.

Baptism

Christian Baptism is the immersion in water into the name of the Father, the Son and Holy Ghost, of those who have professed repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Those requesting or enquiring about baptism are invited to attend classes of instruction conducted by the Minister or an appointee. The baptism itself takes place at a regular worship service in the presence of the congregation and friends. Special consideration is given to a candidate who for medical, or other, reasons may not be totally immersed in water.

Membership

The church has an 'Open membership' so that persons seeking membership who have not been baptised in the manner described in the Union's Declaration of Principle may, at the discretion of the Church Members' Meeting, be accepted for full membership based on their own public profession of faith.

Applications for membership can be requested verbally to the Minister or Diaconate. Our Church Constitution is available on request and can be consulted regarding both the process and the responsibilities of church membership.

What are our practices?

Child Dedication (which also implies 'Parent Dedication')

All requests and arrangements for a service of Child Dedication are made directly to the Minister who will explain what our Baptist faith teaches in this respect.

Weddings

The church premises are 'solemnised' for marriage ceremonies and the serving Minister is an appointed Registrar. (Other church members may also be appointed and registered.)

Requests for Church Weddings are made directly to the Minister who meets with the couple – and sometimes the families– and offers pre-marriage counsel. All arrangements and decisions in relation to this are the responsibility of the Minister and are done in the context of confidentiality.

Funerals

Funeral services and all the arrangements for such are made directly with the Minister whose family bereavement ministry and counselling includes the planning of the service. The Minister also liaises with the Undertakers and any other people whom the family would like to participate.

How is the church administered?

The autonomy of each local church is fundamental to the Baptist denomination, and our priorities and activities are agreed and organised locally.

The 'church' as a legal entity is defined as the members of a charitable, unincorporated association governed by our Constitution, which has the primary purpose of advancing the Christian faith according to the principles of the Baptist denomination.

Our **Constitution** is a legal document which covers in detail the following areas, and should be consulted:

- The purpose, beliefs, and activities of the church
- The process and responsibilities of Membership
- The process, conduct and outcomes of Church Meetings
- The appointment and removal of Charity Trustees
- The responsibilities, proceedings and power of Charity Trustees
- The appointment and removal of Ministers
- Finance and record keeping

In practice, we appoint several Deacons (the Diaconate), amongst whom are also the Church Secretary and Church Treasurer, who together with the Minister(s) are the Charity Trustees.

All decisions are made at Church Meetings by the Membership, not in private by the Diaconate or the Minister.

Many of our activities are run by regular church members, though we operate a Baptist Union approved Child Protection Policy for areas which involve young people and children's work.

Historical background

The history of Bury Baptist Church springs out of the history of three other churches which, for various reasons towards the end of the 1960's found they could no longer function as such.

Ebenezer Baptist Church (Tenterden Street)

In order to widen the busy thoroughfare of Tenterden Street, Bury Corporation bought the land occupied by Ebenezer Baptist Church. A survey revealing structural defects of the buildings confirmed the wisdom of this action.

Chesham Baptist Church

This building also revealed structural defects. Developers bought the land and buildings located on Walmersley Road at the junction of Chesham Road and erected shops on the site.

A final joint service of these two churches was held on 22 November 1970 and the official closure date for both was 25 December, 1970.

Christian (Baptist) Church

Around the year 1896, the Rev Franklin Haworth became the founding pastor of a church known as Christian Church located on Rochdale Road at the junction of Heywood Street. His ministry attracted a large congregation. He taught and practised 'Believers Baptism' on confession of faith. Bound copies of the church magazine called the 'Messenger' are deposited in the Public Records files of Bury Library.

With the agreement of the Trustees and Members of these three churches, the proceeds of sale were used for the purchase and development of our current premises.

The first Minister of the new church was Rev T A Roberts. He was succeeded in 1978 by Rev James McEwan who during his 31 years of ministry led the church in both numerical and spiritual growth.