

Calne Methodist Church Profile for 2022



Background

Calne is a market town with a population of approximately 20,000. The heritage quarter and older part of the town are surrounded by new housing developments with more planned. A large proportion of the working community commute to Lyneham, Chippenham, Swindon, Bath and even Reading and Bristol.

Calne Town website - <http://www.calne.gov.uk/default.aspx>

Calne Methodist Church is part of the Wiltshire United Area which brings together Methodist, URC and United Churches extending from Warminster in the south to Calne in the north east and Corsham in the north west.

Wiltshire United Area website - <http://www.wiltsunitedchurches.org.uk/>

Calne Methodist Church is located on the south side of the town and although the building dates from 1876, extensive refurbishments were undertaken 20 years ago creating a flexible area for worship and outreach. We have 47 members and 21 adherents covering a wide age range. We serve Calne as well as Heddington, Hilmarton, Cherhill, Derry Hill and the surrounding villages. There is always a warm welcome and this is frequently commented upon by visitors and new members. Communication is very important to us, so that everyone is in touch even if they cannot come on a Sunday. We have an excellent pastoral system and the weekly notices and monthly newsletter are emailed far and wide as well as the hard copies which are also available.

We take an active part in the Calne Partnership of Churches and have hosted their Foodbank in the recent past. Within the Wiltshire United Area our members include the current Area Treasurer and the Safeguarding Lead who are part of the Area Executive. We also had a URC minister for a number of years and this helped us to gain an insight into how others within our area worship.

The manse is situated in a quiet cul-de-sac within walking distance of the Church and the town centre. We are a Fair Trade Church and we have our own Church Website, <https://calnemethodist.ddns.net/> which was completely updated during lockdown.



Church Management Structure

The Church Council meets three times a year.

Our Stewards group meets every two months with the minister.

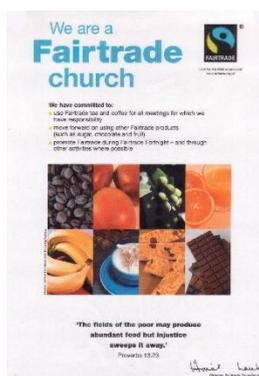
Our Annual Church Meeting is held in November, although we will hold additional meetings if they are called for.

The following groups report to the Church Council:

Finance Committee, Property Group, Worship Consultation, Pastoral, Going Forward Group, Young People's Church, Silver Street Band, Youth Club, Church Choir, Stewards, Missions, Wesley's Kitchen and SupaNova.

Others support our Church Council without being members or adherents and we value their support as we increasingly find it hard to cover all the positions that need to be filled.

We have taken an active position on Safer Recruitment and have interviewed all those in positions of responsibility with young people and vulnerable adults. We are aware of our responsibilities for GDPR and Data protection.



Prior to the Pandemic

Our main worship activity was on Sunday mornings with extra services at special times of the year, led by our minister, three Local Preachers or three Worship Leaders. There were various other activities which provided opportunities for us to try new things in our worship and we have enjoyed a variety of styles including All Age Worship which we held monthly and Café Style Worship. Our worship has been enhanced through the use of drama, music and technology.

We also had various activities which provided opportunities for fellowship within the church and for outreach to the local community:

Women's Fellowship held a weekly meeting for bible study and discussion and of course a friendly cup of tea.

Occasional holiday at home days for older people with games, crafts and lunch were well attended and enjoyed. This involved people from our own church, some from the community lunch club which hired our premises each week and others who responded to adverts around the town.

Supa Nova, a ladies choir involving members of our church and the local community is led by one of our members and has actively taken part in many of our church concerts. (It has already begun to successfully meet again following the easing of restrictions.)

Silver Street Band was a mixture of adults and children connected to our church family who took part in concerts and church services.

We had a small youth group which met monthly which involved children from our church family and some of their friends. They were actively involved in fund raising for charity.

We had a small team of cooks who provided Sunday lunch for our church family on several Sundays across the year.

Our Messy Church group met every other month and although this was a small group of families they regularly attended, throughout the pandemic we have endeavoured to keep in contact with them.

Our Young People's Church although small met each week and enjoyed a variety of activities mostly based on the Roots material, where possible they have joined in our zoom worship online. They have supported JMA and this has continued to be encouraged throughout the pandemic.

Our Bible Book Club study group meet regularly and has continued to meet becoming an online group.

Our weekly prayer lunch has continued but online or on the telephone. As has our telephone prayer circle.

We regularly had a stall at community events in Calne and our Christmas Craft Fayre has plans to return this year.



The church in lockdown

On Sunday 15 March 2020 our normal Sunday morning worship was followed by an excellent lunch where we enjoyed our collective fellowship little suspecting how long it would be before we could all meet again in person for worship. By the following Sunday we had got our heads around how to set up and participate in worship using Zoom, and for over a year we conducted Zoom services every Sunday morning, where we were joined by friends from Bromham and Corsham and further afield. These services have been led by our minister as well as our three very active Local Preachers and our three Worship Leaders. We quickly got into the routine of sending out weekly service sheets by email and by post so that everybody could join in by Zoom or by phoning in or by using the printed sheets at home. We also recorded the service for people to listen to at home. When the lockdown was at its most restrictive, the fellowship provided by the Zoom services was particularly appreciated. We continued to support the Calne Partnership of Churches taking part in their online videos for Christmas and Easter.

Our enthusiastic church choir although small have continued to meet when possible and have recorded music for zoom services, taken part in our Christmas video and since services recommenced in church led the singing.

In addition to maintaining Sunday services, we also ensured that we kept up pastoral care for our church family, with pastoral group leaders keeping in regular contact with their groups via telephone calls. Church Councils and other meetings as necessary were also conducted via Zoom, and when we decided that we should go ahead with replacing the church boiler at a cost of over £8,000, an appeal to members and friends produced more than enough to cover the cost without drawing upon reserves. Indeed, one of the unexpected aspects of the period when the church was closed was that freewill offerings over and above the fundraising appeal did not decline but actually increased.

In May 2021 we started taking gradual cautious steps towards reopening the church for worship, and at the time of writing we have resumed weekly Sunday morning services at Calne which are also being put out on Zoom for those who are not yet ready or able to attend in person. The general feeling is that the period when we were unable to meet face to face for Sunday worship has strengthened not weakened our fellowship.

Our Vision - Going Forward

Early in 2020 and prior to the Covid Pandemic and lockdowns we decided to look at our mission and question the direction God wanted us to go in. This was prompted, in part, by a property review which identified work that needed to be done to the Church building. Lockdown and the moving of worship onto social media accelerated this thinking.

We agreed to use the Methodist Church, Eight Step Process for Mission Planning. We decided on how to proceed, formed a mission working group who created a work and time schedule. We have completed a community audit and conducted a church review. (All these documents are available on request). We are now moving to the next step which is "dreaming together". This will look at what is possible and where the Holy Spirit is directing us. We hope to conclude this in the autumn and we will employ an independent facilitator for this part of the process.

It is clear from the consultation process that there is a desire by the church family to engage with this mission and reshape our vision for the future. The consultation documents describe a caring people. A community of faith who are resourceful, concerned about the community and wishing to engage with other churches and the wider community. This shows a church that is faithful to Jesus' commandment to love one another. It also

shows that we are multi-faceted, value what we do for many reasons, and in the words of one contributor 'we are more than the sum of our parts'

We have already taken the first steps forward and are currently in discussions to purchase new camera and media equipment to continue our online presence because this has been important to our congregation who, for whatever reason, can't attend in person or live away. There are currently over 30 people attending our worship each week, either in the building or online.

The next steps will define our vision and the work God wishes us to concentrate on.

The New Pastorate

We seek a Minister who will join with us in our new vision and direction, who will bring inspiration, leadership, and guidance and is not afraid to challenge us in an understanding and caring way.

The Minister would need to be involved in our ecumenical work both in the Area and within the town where we have close relationships with other churches.

We wish to extend our worship in both scope and style and for our Minister to work with our worship consultation committee, worship leaders and local preachers and stewards to achieve this.

Our church family appreciates the pastoral care that a minister brings to our church and would expect them to be part of our pastoral visitor's team. This would extend to those we meet in our outreach work.

Our future vision will be an exciting opportunity, although change is challenging for all and may be difficult for some. We will look to our Minister to walk with us in pursuit of God's vision for Calne.

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Calne Methodist Church (39) are currently using the Methodist Church, 8 Step Process for Mission Planning to determine their way forward. They are keen to embrace new technology and have continued to zoom their worship to those who cannot join them in the church building, as well as posting services to those not ready to return yet. They are a Fairtrade Church, with a strong Pastoral team. Their worship is well supported by active Local Preachers, Worship Leaders and an enthusiastic Choir.