

BROMHAM METHODIST CHAPEL PASTORATE PROFILE for 2022

CONTEXT

Our Chapel lies physically and spiritually at the heart of a remarkable working village, noted for its friendliness and sense of community.

Bromham is a spread out village including several small hamlets situated almost centrally between Calne, Devizes, Melksham and Chippenham lying at the foot of the spectacular Beacon Hill and Roundway Down.

Traditionally Bromham's main industry has been market gardening covering about 4,000 acres although in the last few years several growers have ceased business. However there is a small engineering factory and several small businesses. There are two pubs, a post office twice a week, a butchers and a thriving village shop. The Primary school has approximately 100 pupils and there are village sports facilities.

Our Chapel is 222 years old and is built into the hillside with a 2ft. walk way round three sides, hence no surrounding grounds and no hall. In 1993 the original gallery was converted into a Sunday School room with a kitchen unit so it can also be used for small meetings and refreshments. A toilet & wash basin were installed downstairs. The false ceiling has been removed restoring the Chapel to its original glory. We have gas central heating and a loop system. Generally the building is in a good state of repair.

Bromham's population is about 2,000 with a good mixture of all age groups but without any significant ethnic element.

We enjoy excellent relations with the Parish Church of St. Nicholas, uniting in several services during the year as well as in many community activities. In this we are grateful for the good working relationship between our Minister and the Rector of St. Nicholas's Church.



MINISTRY AND MISSION

We are very fortunate to be part of the village of Bromham which has a strong community spirit. Two months ago our village social centre, which we used on a regular basis, having no church hall of our own, was burnt to the ground. Once again this village has pulled together to support each other. In the past we have used the village social centre for many activities. We now have a small temporary building in place which we hope to use and will once more bring us out into the community. Our services and events are publicised in the village magazine.

STRENGTHS

Nobody needs to be reminded of what we have experienced over the last 15-18 months. We have been challenged and will continue to be challenged in many different ways. We are a very small congregation but very much a family as we have continued to support one another even though we could not meet. We are friendly and welcoming which has resulted in lots of support in many different ways.

Over 10 years ago we removed some pews from the back of the chapel and created a coffee area. We meet once a month on a Saturday morning. This has been a great success and brought many different people through the Chapel doors. We do our utmost to maintain the building and pay our way even when large repairs are necessary. The friendship with St. Nicholas's church and the village school is a huge strength.

WEAKNESSES

Our obvious weakness is a lack of congregation on a Sunday. We would love to see a few more people in the pews. We are visited by the school twice a year, usually Easter and Advent which we consider to be a BIG plus. We are also part of the Easter or Advent trail which is jointly organised by the school, St Nicholas's Church and ourselves.

LOCAL CHAPEL LIFE

We meet every Sunday at 10.30 a.m. and celebrate communion once a month. Our services are often led by local Preachers, when the need has arisen we have led the service ourselves with everyone taking part. Many of our services and events involve us in village life. **Coffee Mornings, Tea on the Lawn, Carnival, Harvest Supper, Flower Festival, May Day Fair, Teddy Bear Trail and Chapel Bazaar.** Some of the events are to fund raise for ourselves and others to support village events. Support for village events will be much needed over the next two years while we rebuild our village hall.

We support the local Salvation Army with their Christmas Appeal by holding a Toy Service in December. We alternate with the Parish Church for Christian Unity Sunday and we host a lent Lunch in aid of Devizes Food Bank.

As we all re-emerge from the pandemic and start to walk the path back to regular services and events we will be looking for a minister who is understanding, sympathetic and caring and is aware of the pressures and fears we may find ourselves under. We would like him or

her to continue our links with St. Nicholas Church and the school and be strong in pastoral and community life.

We are privileged to be part of “Villages Together”. In approximately 2008 several villages joined together for a Sunday Service (reason being lack of Preachers to fill the Plan). This became very successful and has continued ever since. We ourselves plan the frequency of the services with local Preachers/Minister taking the lead. This has become a great strength and has increased our Chapel family and fellowship.

We use Combined Mission Praise, Hymns and Psalms and Singing the Faith. We use a new up-to-date music box.

There are two Chapel meetings each year with an average attendance of ten. We have two joint meetings with St. Nicholas’s Church and two meetings with the other villages. We always aim to be represented at the Area (Circuit) Meeting. Any new initiative from the Area Executive or Methodist Church we try to take on board.

More than anything that has gone before in this profile we know that the Spirit of the Lord is with us. Our aim is to be an outward looking Chapel, a Christian witness for everyone and to follow the God who goes before us.

The author of Ephesians writes – “These little congregations clinging to the edges of the Roman Empire are at the heart of God’s plan”. This is an extraordinary claim but one in which we can have confidence.

We hope that we as a congregation still have the faith and confidence to believe this is true.

The majority of members and adherents were involved in the preparation of this profile.

September 2021.

