

Welcome!



Bourton Baptist Church **Handbook**

Station Road, Bourton on the Water, GL54 2AA

Rev Ian Fowler – 01451 824225 or 07906 518316

Bourton Baptist Church

Who we are, what we believe, what we do Our membership and how to join

We are part of the West of England Baptist Network (WEBNet) and an overall part of Baptist Union of Churches in the UK. Further information is here -

http://www.baptist.org.uk/Groups/220484/Who_are_Baptists.aspx

For Baptists the concept of a family is important.

The church is not so much a particular place or building, but rather a family of believers, committed to Christ, to one another and to the service of God in the world.

We long for people to know Jesus, to be transformed by knowing Him, and bless our communities by His work within us. This is why we exist. It is summed up in our **vision** –

“To make Christ known, by growing a healthy church in relationship, for God's mission”

We recognise that God is at work in this world, and it is our task to join His mission, wherever this may be. We know we are called to love our neighbour, and Jesus has a particular heart for the marginalised. That is why you'll find our church engaged in foodbank, community groups such as Open4U on a Thursday; running parent and toddler groups, and providing a youth club.

Bourton Baptist Church provides worship on Sunday, with Communion of the Lord's Supper on a regular basis, plus other activities throughout the week providing friendship and community, worship, reading the bible, and prayer. Church Members' meetings are held regularly.

Our Mission

Bourton Baptist Church is committed to *intentionally* developing a culture where we...

SEEK TO BE A MOVEMENT OF SPIRIT LED COMMUNITIES:

As those who have encountered the living Christ, to intentionally seek his will and purpose for our church and every expression of our shared life.

[\(Gal. 5:22-25\)](#)

FEEL LIKE ONE TEAM:

Celebrating diversity; valuing, respecting and trusting each other as we work together in partnerships – making sure everyone feels included and listened to.

[\(1 Cor. 12:24b-27\)](#)

EMBRACE ADVENTURE:

Being serious about discipleship, willing to take risks, pioneer and move out of the comfort zone of familiar ways of doing things.

[\(Matt. 28:18-20\)](#)

INSPIRE OTHERS:

With a generosity of spirit, energise and motivate people to be all that God created them to be.

[\(Eph. 5:1-2\)](#)

SHARE A HUNGER FOR GOD'S COMING KINGDOM:

Nurturing a “holy discontent” that arises from our desire to give practical expression to our vision of God’s purpose for creation – confronting evil, injustice and hypocrisy and challenging worldly attitudes to power, wealth, status and security both within and beyond our church.

[\(Matt. 6:9-10\)](#)

What we do at Bourton Baptist Church

The fact that you are reading this handbook means that you have visited Bourton Baptist Church and want to know about its work and activities. As a Baptist Church we are committed to sharing the good news of God's love for people, and this will happen through teaching and explaining the Christian faith as well as practical action.

We want to tell you about our activities – so that you can join in!

WHAT WE DO

At Bourton Baptist Church we try to provide a range of activities for different age groups and interests.

Our normal Sunday services are:

- 9:45 am - 10:30 am - 'Traditional' service with hymns, prayer, Bible reading and sermon.
- 10:30 am - 11:15 am - Coffee and Fellowship. This is intended as an opportunity for those attending either service to join together as family to chat and share coffee and fellowship together.
- 11:15 am - 12:30 pm - 'Contemporary' worship - a more informal service with song worship, prayer, testimony, Bible reading and sermon.

Please Note: There is only ONE morning service at 10:30 am on the 3rd Sunday of January, March, May, July, September and November; these services are followed by a Bring & Share Lunch and a Church Members' meeting.

- Our evening service at 6.00 pm is more contemplative in style.

There is a pre-school group (Noah's Ark toddlers group) on a Monday morning and a Youth Club for children and young people on Fridays in term time at 5.00 pm to 6.30 pm.

A typical week at Bourton Baptist Church includes:

Mon	Noah's Ark Toddlers group - (every Monday in term time) Singing Group House Group: 35 Roman Way (first and third Mondays)	9:30am – 11.30am 1.00 pm – 3.00 pm 7:30 pm
Tues	Ecumenical Bible study at Shalom (first Tuesday of the month)	7:00 pm
Wed	Prayer Meeting at Church Deacons' Meeting (first Wednesday of month, excluding August) Market Close Service (first Wednesday of the month) Women's Meeting (2nd and 4th Weds of the month, excl Aug) 'Open for God' group at the Manse	9:30 am 10.00 am 2:30 pm 2.45 pm 7:00 pm
Thur	Church open for prayer & chat (warmer months) Open4U Jubilee Lodge Service - (4th Thursday of the month)	11.00 am – 4.00 pm 10.00 am – 4.00 pm 11.00 am
Fri	Church open for prayer & chat (warmer months) Bible Study Group in church Prayer Meeting at Foxleat, Marshmouth Lane Youth clubs (term time only)	11.00 am – 4.00 pm 11:00 am 3.00 pm 5.00 pm – 6.30 pm
Sat	Church open for prayer & chat (warmer months) Prayer meeting at Manse Coffee Morning at Church (second Saturday of the month)	11.00 am – 4.00 pm 8.30 am 10:00 am - 12 Noon
Sun	Traditional Morning Service Coffee/tea/cake and fellowship Contemporary Morning Service * 3rd Sunday – Holy Communion	9:45 am 10:30 am 11.15am
<p>Please Note: There is only ONE morning service at 10:30 am on the 3rd Sunday of January, March, May, July, September and November; these services are followed by a Bring & Share Lunch and a Church Members' meeting.</p>		
	Evening Service * 1st Sunday – Entertaining Possibilities * 4th Sunday – Holy Communion	6:00 pm

WHO'S WHO

Becoming part of a new community of Christians can be an opportunity to make new friends. It also requires some understanding of who people are, and what they do.

The church has a full-time Minister: Rev Ian Fowler. You will get to know him quite quickly because he will make it a priority to meet you, because we want to know how our Church can help you, and to ensure that any questions you may have are answered. The Minister can be contacted at minister@bourtonbaptist.com or on 07906 518316. We also employ a part time Youth Worker and a part-time cleaner.

Everyone else in the Church is a volunteer, using their time to help run the Church and its activities. There are many people and many tasks – and everyone is important.

The Church has a group that has overall responsibility for leading the Church; it is called the Leadership Team or Diaconate and comprises:

The Minister: Rev Ian Fowler
Church Secretary: Mrs Sally Lenihan
Church Treasurer: Mr Tim Newstead
Deacons: Mrs Philippa Duckmanton, Mrs Valerie Leach, and
Mrs Dawn Pike

Contact details can be found in the Church Diary which is published monthly.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Mrs Philippa Duckmanton is the Youth Worker who organises the children's and young people's activities.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The contact for any Safeguarding questions or issues is Mrs Sally Lenihan (secretary@bourtonbaptist.com). Pastoral care in the Church is organised by the Minister. If you need help and support or information on any of the other activities please contact Rev Ian Fowler on minister@bourtonbaptist.com or 07906 518316.

COMMUNICATION – SHARING INFORMATION

Information about the church and its activities appear on the website (www.bourtonbaptist.co.uk). In addition, there is a Facebook page, a monthly diary, also shown on our website, and a printed notice sheet that is handed out on a Sunday.

VOLUNTEERING AND JOINING IN

There are many activities where we need extra help. We want to encourage you to join in and will try to find an opportunity for you to help, and make new friends.

There are some parts of Church life where we need to take special care. Where activities involve children or vulnerable adults we need to make sure that the people who help are suitable, so if you are asked to take any responsibility for these activities we will need to speak to you in more detail about the Church's policies concerning the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

SAFETY

Safety is always important and we do our best to make sure the Church premises are safe. However, we realise that accidents can happen. Please let one of the deacons know if there is a problem. If you need the First Aid kit it is kept in the kitchen together with the Accident Book which should be completed as required.

The Church has fire extinguishers located around the building, but we hope you will never need them!

Nobody should be using step ladders or undertaking any kind of maintenance or building work whilst they are on their own in the building. More details of the Church's health and safety policy can be found on the notice board in the hall.

JOINING BOURTON BAPTIST CHURCH

Bourton Baptist Church is governed by the Church Constitution in accordance with Charity Law and is organised through the Church Members' Meeting; copies of the Church Constitution are available from the Church Secretary and can also be found on the church website. Individuals can ask to become members of the Church.

For people who have recently become Christians this will normally include being baptised by immersion as a sign of their new found faith in Jesus Christ.

Belonging to a Baptist Church involves some responsibilities. As well as having the opportunity to participate in Church Members' Meetings, there is a responsibility to listen carefully to what others are saying, speaking carefully, and helping to make good decisions about the life and work of the Church.

The responsibilities of membership normally include:

- Attending worship and participating in Church activities.
- Personal prayer and Bible study.
- Participation at the Communion of the Lord's Supper as a privilege and a priority.
- Helping the Church whenever possible by using gifts and abilities to advance the Purpose of the Church through its activities.
- Attending and participating in Church Members' Meetings.
- Giving regular financial support to the Church in proportion to personal resources and circumstances.
- Upholding Christian values.

When people wish to seek membership of the Church, they are usually visited by two people who are already members, who will ask some questions about the applicant's Christian journey and make a recommendation on the

applicant's membership to the next Church Members' Meeting. From time to time people move house and can no longer be members of the Church. Usually they choose another Church and their membership is transferred. On other occasions people do not want to continue with their membership so they may resign. Sometimes people are missing for a long time and, even though we encourage them to return, this does not always happen and the membership list would need to be adjusted.

Very occasionally there are difficulties and an individual may not have maintained the high standards expected of Christian believers and Church members. They may have caused disagreements in the Church and their behaviour may have become unhelpful and disruptive. In these rare circumstances it may be necessary to reconsider the person's membership but this would only happen after every other opportunity for resolving the problem had been tried. Sometimes the church members need to end a person's membership.

MEMBERS CHOOSING THEIR LEADERS AND MINISTERS

The deacons and minister in a Baptist Church are chosen by the Church members. Therefore, there are processes for appointing people to these important responsibilities. Once a minister has been appointed, that person normally serves the Church until the time when they resign or retire. Very rarely will a minister be asked to leave the Church by the Church Members' Meeting.

The Deacons, Church Secretary and Church Treasurer of Bourton Baptist Church are appointed from among the members; they usually serve for a period of three years. To make it easier to ensure continuity, one third of the deacons retire each year, so that over a three year cycle each leader has stood down and been re-appointed.

In this Church we have 5 Deacons, including the Church Secretary and Church Treasurer. In February there is an election of deacons but the process will begin earlier. In January Church Members will be asked to nominate individuals who might be suitable to serve as deacons. A list of candidates will be prepared and at the Church Members' Meeting a vote will be taken. To be appointed as deacons of Bourton Baptist Church the candidates must receive 60% of the vote.

There are details in the Church's governing document (called the Constitution Memorandum and Articles of Association) and if you have questions about this you should ask the Church Secretary.

MONEY

The Church receives income from donations made by members and individuals who attend the Church. Tax payers are encouraged to complete a Gift Aid declaration so that tax can be recovered, giving added benefit to the Church and increasing its income.

In this Church we aim to follow the following principles in managing our money:

1. To give 5% of our income to Home Mission (the funds of the Baptist Union of Great Britain) and to give 5% to BMS World Mission.
2. Further income is given to support other external charities – decisions about this are made by the deacons and members.
3. All our money is used to advance the Christian faith and serve our local community and those in need – this also involves many payments that are practical and that are associated with the organisation and maintenance of the Church. Our principal expenses include:
 - Paying our Minister.
 - Buying resources to be used in the mission of the church.
 - Paying administration costs for the church, including annual subscriptions.
 - Paying gas, electricity and water bills.
 - Maintaining the Church grounds and buildings.
 - Reimbursing reasonable expenses to those who volunteer for the Church, especially when they are asked to attend conferences or other events.

CHURCH MEMBERS' MEETINGS

Members meet together in a Church Members' Meeting under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and under the Lordship of Christ to discern the mind of God in the affairs of the Church.

There are three types of formal Church Members' Meetings: Ordinary Church Members' Meetings, Special Church Members' Meetings and the Annual General Meeting. Ordinary Church Members' Meetings shall be held at regular intervals on not less than four occasions in any calendar year. One Ordinary

Church Members' Meeting each year shall include the Annual General Meeting for the Church members to receive annual accounts and reports, Charity Trustees reports, and to consider proposals for the strategy and vision of the Church in the coming year, with other appropriate matters.

If publicly invited by an announcement or notice in the same form as is required for calling members to a meeting, those who normally attend Church events may attend a Church Members' Meeting but only Church Members may vote.

Due public notice of any Church Members' meeting shall give at least 7 clear day's-notice of the meeting. Fourteen 14 days clear notice of a Special Church Members' Meeting must be given to all Church Members with as clear an indication as is possible in all the circumstances of the agenda items to be considered.

At all Church Members' Meetings, 20% of the church membership shall constitute a quorum.

Decisions at Ordinary Church Members' Meetings shall require a simple majority. A resolution at a Special Church Members' Meeting – and the appointment of Trustees (Deacons, Church Secretary and Church Treasurer) – requires the support of at least 60% of the Church Members present and eligible to vote.

If a Member wishes to raise an item of importance at a Church Members' meeting, there must be a written request to the Church Secretary. The item will then be discussed by the Deacons prior to the following Members' meeting; any such requests should be submitted well in advance to allow for this discussion to take place.

JOINING IN – AND YOUR IDEAS

We hope you will like attending Bourton Baptist Church. We hope that you will find friends and be able to join in some of our activities. We welcome your ideas and suggestions. Normally new ideas are discussed at a Church Members' Meeting – but if you have ideas or suggestions please contact the Minister, we will be delighted to hear from you.

For further information please contact Rev Ian Fowler on 01451 824225 or 07906 518316

Note: Statements given in this Handbook do NOT override or replace the provisions of the Church Constitution.