

Dedworth Green Baptist Church

To make mature and active disciples of Jesus Christ, who worship and serve God and show God's love inside and outside the church



Church profile, October 2009

MINISTER'S PROFILE

- i. We are looking for a visionary and energetic leader, with a passion for people of all ages, who can enable our church to grow and to meet the challenge of our mission statement:

To make mature and active disciples of Jesus Christ, who worship and serve God and show God's love inside and outside the church.

OUR CHURCH

- i. **MEMBERSHIP:** Currently the membership stands at 44 (30 active members) with a small number of families and a larger number of single people and couples, including some Christians with non-Christian spouses. Ages range from teenagers to the elderly, though the membership is now biased to the over 50s. Those members who are working have quite varied occupations.



Members of the church and their guests relaxing at a church tea this summer.

Increasing and rebalancing the demographics of our membership is one of the key challenges for the immediate future. We have not been able to replace the members we have lost due to the normal causes of church decline and the relatively high turnover associated with the Thames Valley corridor.

- ii. **CHURCH VISION:** We are broadly Evangelical with a strong emphasis on the Holy Spirit, Biblical teaching and Biblical living.

Two years ago, we adopted new a Mission Statement:

To make mature and active disciples of Jesus Christ, who worship and serve God and show God's love inside and outside the church.

This has challenged us to look outwards. We have run Alpha courses and explored and drawn insights from the Purpose Driven Church. We have also run the Marriage Course and a Parenting course, both for church and non-church people.

Recently, the church had an awayday, which identified 4 key areas for the church to focus on in the immediate future:

- **WORSHIP:** Revitalizing our worship of God and building a new understanding of how and why we worship into the church.
- **PEOPLE:** Looking at the great commission and how the church can fulfil its mission statement. In particular, how to grow the church, and rebalance the demographics of the church to make it more representative of the surrounding area.
- **LEADERSHIP:** Looking at how we implement a biblical model of leadership in the church, and facing the challenge of why so few people are prepared to be on the leadership team.
- **BUILDING:** If the church is the body of Christ, how can we use the new building to put Christ in the centre of the community?

This term, these 4 themes are the basis of our preaching, and the church meetings will also include looking at the practical issues these areas raise.

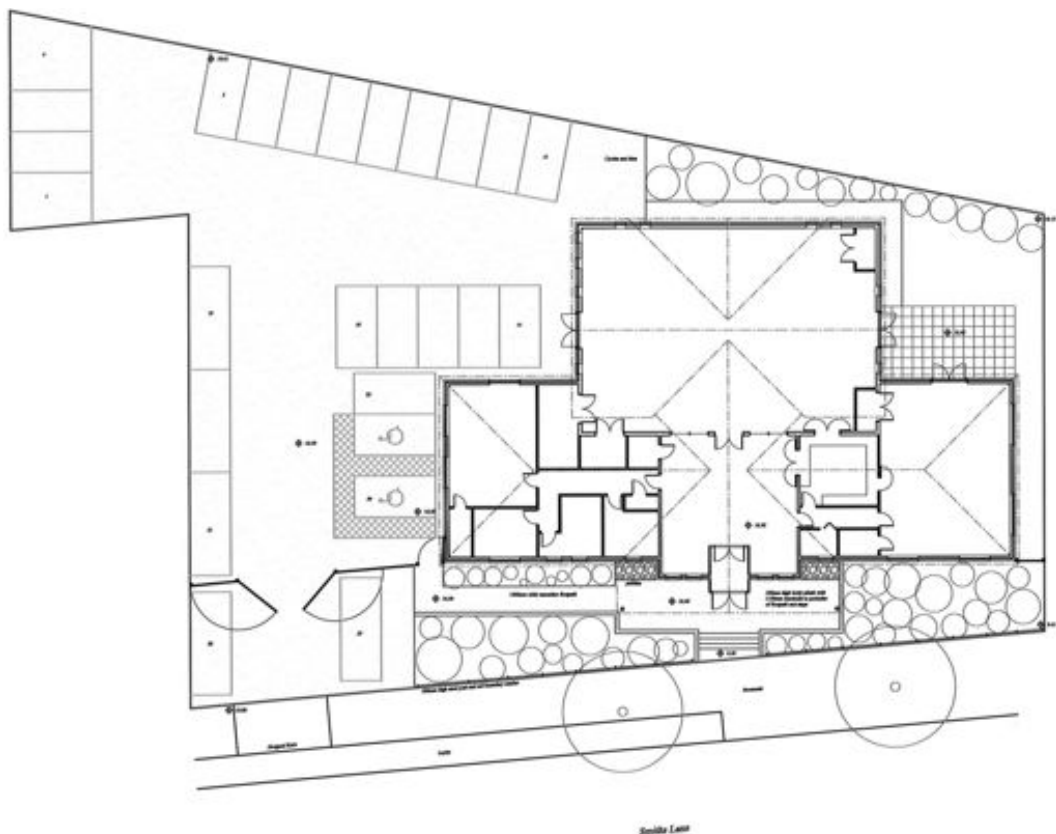
- iii. **PREMISES:** The original Sanctuary was opened in 1959 and an extension was added in 1970. In January 2000 our premises was broken into and a serious fire started, destroying our sanctuary but leaving the remainder of the church buildings. Since then we have made use of the nearby first school hall for our Sunday morning services and other events.

A new sanctuary and meetings rooms are now being built, with demolition of the old premises and site clearance completed and the foundations being built. The building project is being completely financed by donations from both inside and outside the congregation, the insurance money and a legacy recently left to the church. Some excess money is being retained to fund projects for future church growth. The new building will provide the church with a modern sanctuary that can easily accommodate 150 people in a church service, plus 2 other good-sized meeting rooms and an office. It is expected to open in Summer 2010.

The Manse is just over half a mile from the church, and is a three bedroomed semi-detached house with study, garage, and an easily maintained garden.



Facade of new building as it will look from Smith's Lane



Plan of new building and grounds, showing the foyer area, 2 meeting halls (right and left), the main auditorium and office to the front on the left.

- iv. **CHURCH ACTIVITIES:** Our Sunday morning service starts at 10.30a.m and is led by a small group of worship leaders made up of our previous minister and 5 members of the church (2 of which do most of the leading). For most services, the children start in the service and then depart for a children's group called the Zone. This caters for between 5 to 15 children aged from crèche to 13. The church uses both modern choruses and traditional hymns, and has a small music group (typically keyboard, guitar, trumpet with occasional sax and drums). The first Sunday of each month (called 'First Sunday') is a shorter, more accessible, service designed to be an active and participatory exploration of a key topic by the congregation. The third Sunday of each month is a communion service.



Members of the church having a coffee after the church service back in 2006.

We try to ensure that most of our services include time for open prayer, occasional testimony, and the gifts of the spirit, though this is less common than it was. All but 'First Sunday' services include a sermon, and there is a small preaching team involving the minister and two of the members. Most of the preaching was done by the previous minister, but typically once a month the sermon would be given by one of the others on the team.

One of our members runs a weekly Sunday evening service in term time called Youth Church, which caters for the over 13s. This is run together with 2 helpers from River Church.

The Church has a bookstall open on two Sunday mornings each month.

A monthly Sunday evening prayer meeting and a covenanted prayer scheme have recently been started to augment the other prayer activities in the church, such as a weekly Wednesday morning prayer meeting.

The church also runs three home groups, providing pastoral and teaching ministry to their members.

- v. **COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES:** Many of the church activities are open both to church members and anyone outside the church. This includes a Tuesday Fellowship, which meets once a month for lunch, fellowship and devotions for the senior members, and occasional Men's activities, including Men's Breakfasts, cycle rides and walks. In 2007 and 2009, we ran a "Holiday at Home", providing holiday activities for the elderly, and at the other end of the age range, in 2008, we ran a children's "Holiday Club" for both church and non-church families.



In the recent past, the church has put on a "holiday at home" over the summer to provide activities for the elderly. This picture is from the 2007 holiday at home.

There is a parents and toddlers group, called Noah's Ark, which runs once a week in term time and is open to all local residents.

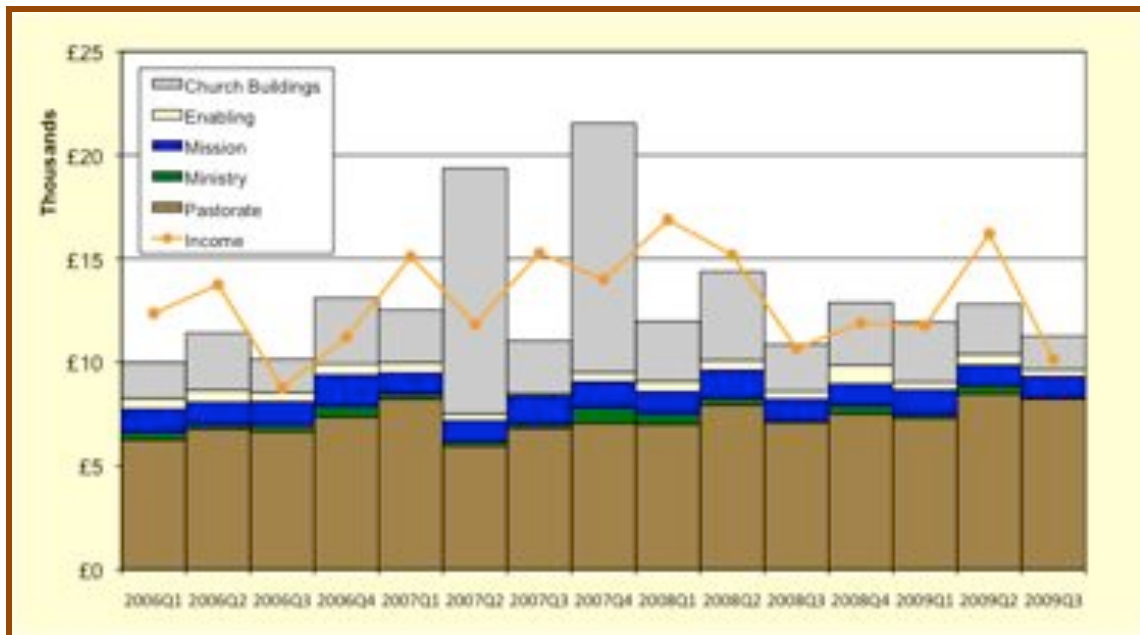
Our 'Friday Nite Proje't runs fortnightly during school terms where members of the church provide a safe place for local youths to meet.

The old premises allowed for various links with local activities and our intention would be to keep or renew these links when the new building opens. These included:

- Buttons Playgroup which meets several times a week, and although this is not a church run activity it is led by one of our members.
- An art group, also led by one of our church members, meets once a week.
- The old premises were regularly used by local community groups for dancing, and keep fit.

We anticipate the new building receiving more enquiries for lettings (and therefore income) but at the time of writing, as a church, we have not revisited our lettings policy, but we are currently unable to allow alcohol to be served on the premises nor is it likely would we allow the premises to be used for other faith activities.

- vi. **CURRENT LEADERSHIP:** The leadership team is currently three Deacons and a Church Administrator. Although we do not have a Treasurer, we do have someone from the church that keeps the church books and presents the accounts to the church. All of the people in these positions are also those who support or are directly involved in other activities in the church and many are over-due a sabbatical.
- vii. **FINANCE:** The church is financially sound, with giving income in excess of expenditure in most quarters. Money has been retained from a recent legacy to ensure a fund is available for projects that support church growth.



Church finances, comparing expenditure (bars) with income (line)

- viii. **LINKS AND ASSOCIATIONS:** We are a member of the Baptist Union, Southern Counties Baptist Association, Home Mission and the local link group for the Baptist Missionary Society, which includes Datchet, Wraysbury & Windsor. We are also part of the Evangelical Alliance; and Churches Together in Windsor.

We have had a long and fruitful relationship with the nearby Baptist churches through the local association. Recently, this local association of Baptist churches has become a “cluster” led by the Slough Baptist church.

We also have a good relationship with a number of the other local churches, including River Church (a large free church based in Maidenhead), the local Anglican Church (All Saints) and the local Catholic Church (St Mark’s).

We contribute to Christian Aid and Water Aid, and have links to a youth counselling service (Windsor Youthtalk) which we helped to establish in association with the other churches and the borough council and on which we retain representation.

The church maintains a simple website to advertise its activities. This can be found at www.dgbc.org.uk.

- ix. **HISTORY:** There has been a non-conformist Christian witness in Dedworth since 1869, and Windsor Baptist took over the work in Dedworth in 1939. By the 1940's, there was an established evening service and various other meetings, such as a Women's meeting, a Girls Life Brigade Company and a Sunday school. The first Baptist Minister in Dedworth was appointed in 1963.

The church has always had a tradition of creativity and performing arts, including, in the past, a number of evangelistic musical events, and this tradition continues today with occasional evening events with a musical flavour.

The recent decline in membership has meant a curtailing of some of these activities, though the ambition would be to retain this aspect of church life.

INTRODUCTION TO DEDWORTH

- i. **DEDWORTH:** A suburb of Windsor, Dedworth is approximately 2 miles to the west of Windsor town centre. It contains a number of small shopping parades, a Tesco supermarket, schools, and two small industrial estates. It has a population of approximately 16,000, as compared to Windsor, Eton and Dedworth combined, which has a population of 30,000. It is a very mixed area, with private housing interspaced with areas of housing association stock and social housing, some of which are areas of social deprivation and isolation. Connecting with these areas of need is an ongoing concern and topic for prayer.

Employment is largely in the service industries, and is biased to the tourist industry and transport (especially Heathrow airport), though there are also a lot of commuters to London and government employment as well. Unemployment is low, typically half the national average, though Dedworth is not immune to the effects of the recession.

Dedworth contains a large army estate supplying housing to families of the battalions garrisoned in the 2 barracks in the town. The army population has had recent troop deployments to active war zones, and so is one area of concern and support for the church. In particular, there have been casualties among the parents who use the Button's Playgroup held at our old premises.

There are 3 churches located close together near the centre of Dedworth; Anglican, Catholic and our own Baptist Church. There are also 2 larger churches in the broader area that operate in Dedworth (King's Church, Windsor and River Church, Maidenhead).

- ii. **EDUCATION:** Windsor has a three-tier middle school system with children transferring schools at the end of year 4 and year 8. Dedworth is served by a number of small first schools; most children transfer at 9 to the local middle school, which has around 500 children. There are two other middle schools in the town, the smallest of which is an ecumenical school (with a strong Roman Catholic influence). At 13 most local children transfer to the comprehensive upper schools, Windsor Boys and Windsor Girls. To the North, in Buckinghamshire and Slough, there is a two-tier system with eleven plus examinations for entry into state grammar schools. Some Windsor children are transported out of the area to these schools.

- iii. **WIDER AREA:** Dedworth lies at the centre of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and enjoys good transport links with both Windsor and Maidenhead. In particular, Windsor is in the commuter belt (22 miles to London), close to the M4, M25, M40, and M3. It has two mainline railway stations to Paddington and Waterloo, and is just eleven miles from Heathrow Airport.

Historical Windsor, with its castle and proximity to Eton, is a well known tourist attraction and enjoys the benefits of the river Thames, Windsor Great Park, a racecourse, a number of ceremonial events associated with the Castle and the army, Legoland, a swimming pool and leisure centre, a marina, a community centre, libraries, and a good shopping centre, with restaurants and continental style pavement cafes.