



# Within These Walls

The Story of Pinchbeck Baptist Church  
1844 - 1994

Joyce Brown

## Preface

**S**tand back and look up at the front of our church building, and you will see the date 1895 embossed on the key-stone. This led us to anticipate, several years ago, that our Centenary was coming up, and we wanted to celebrate it appropriately. Once the research for this book began, we discovered that another "round figure", that of 150 years of history, was also coming up in the mid-1990's, and so the plan for our special year spanning November 1994 - November 1995 was put under way.

But look up again, a little higher this time, and you will see a cross. This reminds us that we are part of the history of all God's people, because Jesus Christ, the living Son

of God, came to this world nearly 20 centuries ago, to bring us forgiveness for our sins and new life and new hope through a transformed relationship with God. So it is that the cross of Jesus Christ is central, and uppermost, in our life as a Christian church. Without the love of Jesus and His gift of Himself to us, we would not be a church community at all. But thanks to that wonderful love, men and women have been drawn to Him all down the ages, and you will discover the story of some of them as you read these pages.

*Arderne Gillies  
Summer 1994.*

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## About the Author

**J**oyce Brown gained a degree in Librarianship at Loughborough University. For several years she was Assistant Area Librarian in Spalding, before transferring to Grantham Library, where she is Area Librarian for Information, with responsibility for reference and

local history materials. Joyce undertook the research for this book as part of her studies towards a degree in local history which she hopes to complete in the near future. Joyce joined Pinchbeck Baptist Church in 1984, and since 1987 she has been Church Secretary.

Mr. Wale's house. There are no other records of the church during this early period, partly because most of the congregation would probably have been unable to read or write, and partly because non-conformists throughout the country were suffering persecution at the time

so did not keep records for fear that they may fall into the wrong hands. So, after a passing mention in the Bishop's visitation records during the early part of the 18th century, no more is known of the Baptists in Pinchbeck until the opening of the Sunday School in 1818.

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## Life in the 'Old' Church

**I**t is the members of a church who determine its history and its effectiveness in the community which it serves. So what sort of people made up the congregation at Pinchbeck in those early days? Two official records exist which give us a 'snapshot' view of the church in 1851. These are the population census, and a census of religious worship which, when compared with the church membership roll, give an overall view of church attendance in Pinchbeck at that date.

In 1851 there were two parish churches in Pinchbeck - St. Mary's in the main village, and a new church in West Pinchbeck which had been opened in 1849, two years before West Pinchbeck actually became a separate parish! There were also a Primitive Methodist and two Wesleyan Methodist chapels, an Independent chapel, and two General Baptist chapels - the one in the main village and another smaller one at Pode Hole.

Between all these places of worship there was a total of 1,092 'free sittings' and 1,540 seats for which pew rents were payable. (In the days before weekly collections were started at about the turn of the century, pew rents were the main source of income in non-con-

formist churches.) Altogether, then, there would have been church seats for almost every member of the parish population which then numbered 3,062. These statistics do not, however, prove that most people attended church - Some attended more than one service a day, and some were even regular attenders at more than one church and so would have been counted among the statistics of both.

Pinchbeck Baptist Church reported in the 1851 religious census that it had 150 free sittings and a further 200 for which pew rents were payable. On 30th March the congregations numbered 100 in the morning and 150 in the evening, together with over 80 children in the Sunday School both in the morning and in the afternoon.

Of the members of the church in 1851, almost all lived and worked in the village, unlike today. Among the men, there were two professionals - the minister and a school master - while the majority were connected directly with the land. Four were farmers, holding between 15 and 66 acres each, and four were agricultural labourers. There were also two carpenters and a thatcher. As is the case

today, there were more women members than men, and of these two are listed as house-servants, one was a nursemaid, and one, a sixty year old widow, was a 'hawker of small wares'. The others were all married women - twelve being married to landowners or farmers, and eight to agricultural labourers. One was the wife of the school master, and the rest were married to tradesmen such as builders, millers, a tailor and a 'machine man'.

A few church members were mentioned individually in the minute books of those early days, and the reasons for their having been mentioned gives us an insight into what life was like in the church at that time.

On 17th March 1844 three men were baptised in the River Glen. This must have shown their dedication as they could not wait either for the warmer weather or for the indoor baptism which they must have known was to be included in the new church building which was opened just five months later.

Mrs. Bardwell applied for baptism and church membership in 1848. In accordance with standard procedure at that time, she was interviewed by four church members to ensure that she was a true believer. These visitors reported back to the church meeting that, while they were satisfied with her account of her beliefs, they were concerned to discover that she was in the habit of taking opium. After a further visit, however, they learned that she did not indulge in the practice for pleasure but for pain relief, and so it was agreed that she could be baptised.

Another case of discipline in the church occurred when a meeting in 1866 excluded a

member from the church for "*having disgraced her Christian profession by becoming a mother, having no husband.*"

A later entry reports that "*on 18th May 1869 Mrs Sarah Thompson, a member of the church, was accidentally and instantaneously killed by a railway train at a crossing near to the Spalding station. She was 70 years of age.*"

In 1867 an important question came to the attention of the members as to whether or not Christians from other denominations should be allowed to take Communion in the church. This caused a great deal of discussion and no decision could be reached immediately. A few months later, however, the members agreed that they would allow members of other churches to take part in Communion subject to the approval of the minister and deacons, but that such people would not be allowed to take any part in the management of church affairs.

Members of other churches were, however, welcome to be baptised and come into full church membership, and there is an entry in the minutes dated January 1872 where two candidates for believers' baptism were considered worthy of particular note because, as their parents were Presbyterians, they had already been baptised as infants but, "*as Baptists regard the ordinance as being designed and intended for believers only ... they desired to follow the Saviour and be immersed in his name.*"

The first three ministers at Pinchbeck (Revs. Simons, Cholerton and Staddon) served the church, between them, for the first 32

years of its life. All of them were very popular in the village and with their congregations, and under their leadership the church thrived, with the total number of members growing to 60 over a period of several years.

Mr. Staddon died in 1878 after suffering what appears to have been a series of strokes which left him paralysed. After his death the church began suffering serious problems. Over the next thirty years membership plummeted until only five people remained in the church in 1911. Several ministers left after very short periods in office. Rev. Robinson was asked to leave in 1879 as the church could not afford to pay his stipend. Then, after four years when the church had no minister, Rev. Riley was appointed in 1883, with a salary of £50 augmented by a gift of £20 from Mr Spurgeon. The following year, however, Mr Riley was dismissed after being accused of slandering some of the church members. This must have caused deep hurt within the church, and they did not appoint another minister until Mr. E.A. Carter, from London, offered his services as honorary pastor in 1895.

A further problem which faced the church at this time was its building. At a special meeting in May 1888 it was reported that the chapel was in a very poor state of repair. This was mainly because the railway, which had opened in 1882, passed very close by and the vibration from the trains had damaged the foundations so badly that the building was considered unsafe. Attention was drawn to another site nearby which was soon to come on the market and, as there was already a house on this site, it was agreed that money already collected to provide a manse could properly be used towards buying the land. At a later meeting it was reported that the trustees had "*purchased a house and garden for the sum of three hundred and thirty pounds.*"

In spite of having a very small membership, no minister and low morale, a new chapel was completed on the site in 1895 at a cost of £550. It was opened on Thursday 7th November, when the celebrations consisted of afternoon and evening sermons preached by Rev. J Barrass of Peterborough, and a public tea which was served in the schoolroom behind the new church.

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## Hard Times and Happy Times

**A**fter the opening of the new church in our present building at the end of 1895, I would like to have been able to report that the members were filled with new enthusiasm and that the Baptist witness in Pinchbeck began to flourish again. This was not, however, the case. Membership continued to be very low and the financial problems, made worse by having to pay for the

new building, meant that those who were left could not afford to pay the stipend for a minister who might have been able to help them. Over the next twenty years the church was led by a number of short-term ministers including two trainees doing 'work experience' from Dunoon College in Scotland, and by Rev. Dart, who was minister between 1908 and 1916. Nothing is known of this latter period

*The Story of Pinchbeck Baptist Church, 1844 - 1994*

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2. (Above) The present church as it looked in 1912, with the old manse to the right. The man looking over the hedge is probably Rev W F Dart, who was the minister at that time.

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3. (Below) The church as it looks today, with the new manse to the left.





4. *The opening of the new manse in 1946. In the doorway are Mr and Mrs Cecil Turner with Stephen Mews, in the middle is Mr Percy Mews, and to the right are Rev and Mrs Dolton with their son David.*

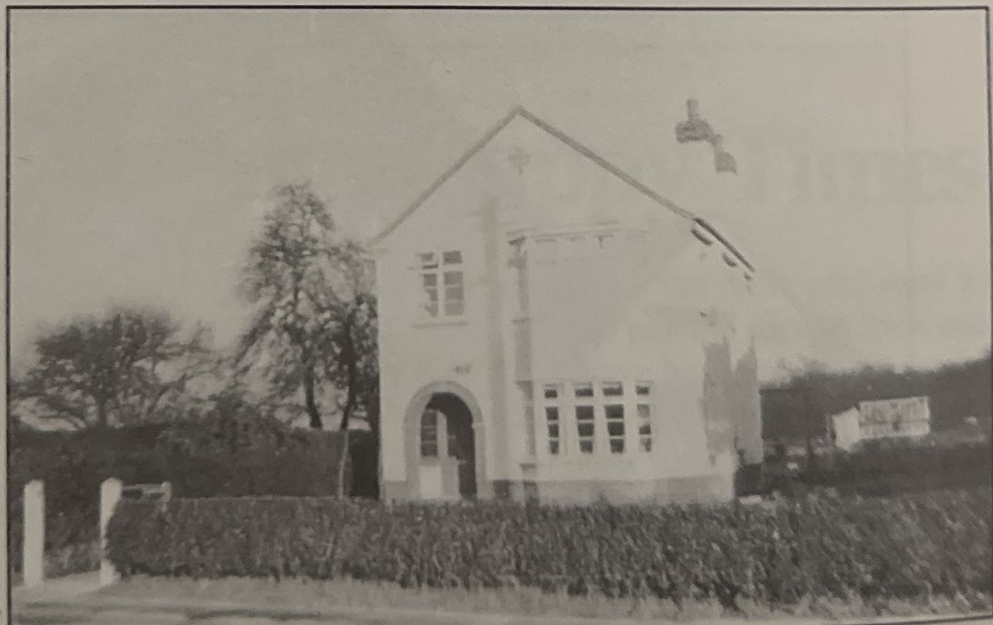
year which he was then earning. Membership was still very low at the church, and so were the collections, so all the church could offer him for his services was a home, the profits from the manse garden, as much money as could be raised, and permission to work part time on the land if he wished. Under his leadership the number of members began to increase, and he was obviously well-respected in the village as about 150 people attended his recognition

of the church's history as the secretary at the time admitted to making no records - it appears that he and the minister did not get on very well!

A turning point in the fortunes of the church occurred in 1917 when Pastor Dodson was appointed as minister. He had previously been employed as a store keeper at Shippea Hill, but had had to leave this post as he could not afford to support his wife and six children on the wage of £60 a

service. During his time as minister, mid-week adult Bible classes were started for "instruction and mutual improvement in the

5. *The manse as it looked in 1950 before the addition of the study and garage.*



*Christian character*". It was also at this time that open membership was instituted at the church. This meant that people could now become members, not only by believers' baptism, but also by confession of faith, or by transfer from other Christian denominations. Pastor Dodson, sadly, had to leave the church in 1922 to take over the family haulage business after the death of his son. He later returned to ministry, however, when he built the Pennygate Mission in Spalding in 1933 and became its first minister.



6. ...as it looked until early 1994.

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After the resignation of Pastor Dodson the members of the church recognised that they could no longer afford to pay a full-time min-

ister on their own, so an agreement was reached to share a minister with the church at Gosberton. The Gosberton members agreed to pay £40 a year towards the stipend while Pinchbeck contributed £45 and the manse. This sum was augmented by a grant from the

Sustentation Fund, which was the forerunner of the Home Mission Fund.

7. ...and with its newly-fitted double glazed windows and door.



A very popular early minister of the Fellowship of Pinchbeck and Gosberton was Rev. William Walker who moved to the area from Hillsborough Baptist Church in Sheffield in 1928. At the meeting called to decide whether or not to invite him to become minister, there





8. A garden party at the manse showing, from left to right, Mrs Russell, Mrs Olive Kirk, Mrs Doris Fell and Mrs Kath Fouldes.

was "very little discussion ... as there was complete unanimity that so far as we were concerned at Pinchbeck, we should be happy indeed if we could secure his services." Presumably, the church at Gosberton felt the same way because Rev. Walker was appointed and served the Fellowship until 1932. In that year, however, he reached retiring age, and the church received a letter from the Baptist Union saying that, after he had left, they could no longer afford to continue giving the Fellowship a grant towards the stipend of any future minister. Rev. Walker offered to continue to serve the churches after his retirement financed only by his pension, but this was not permitted by the superannuation fund rules so, with great regret, he and Mrs Walker had to leave in 1932. The church minutes at that time record that "Mr. Walker's pastorate of 3½ years had been a faithful one, and his and Mrs. Walker's many kindly and helpful acts had deeply endeared them to everyone connected with the church, and also the neigh-

the following year. The afternoon and evening services were then led by Rev. A. Rattray Allen, minister at Chelmsford, and there was a public tea in between the services. This was held in the village hall as the schoolroom was not big enough to accommodate the 104 guests who attended from churches all round the area.

An important development as far as the church property was concerned occurred in 1946. As far back as 1938 it had been noted that the manse was becoming very dilapidated and, as the pastorate was vacant at that time, the church had decided to sell the house and build a new manse on the other side of the church. This project was, however, delayed for several years because of the war, and during this period the old house was rented to a family of London evacuees, and then it was eventually sold in 1965.

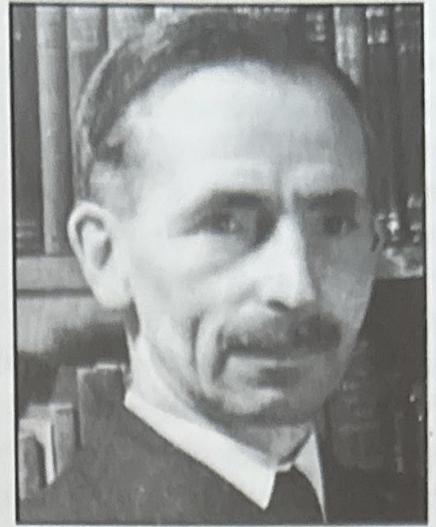
The new manse, built on a piece of land sold to the church by Mr. Jack Priestley, was

*bours in the village."*

The Centenary of the founding of the Baptist church in Pinchbeck occurred, of course, in 1944 and the church planned to celebrate this important occasion with a special service during the autumn. This, however, proved impossible as none of the invited guest speakers could attend at that time. So the celebrations were postponed until February of

officially opened on 25th September 1946. The ceremony was performed by Mrs. Cecil Turner and special services were conducted by Rev. Evan Williams, President of the East Midlands Baptist Association. Mrs Turner was also the tea convenor for this occasion, and reported difficulties in providing a meal because of the introduction of bread rationing. In the end, though, she did manage to purchase bread, salad and acelet and, with the addition of home-made cakes donated by church members, a meal was provided for a hundred guests at a cost of 1/6 per head.

Having built the new manse, the problem still remained as to how to repay the loan taken out to pay for it. One suggestion which was made at a church meeting early in 1947 was to hold a garden fete that summer which, it was hoped, might raise £100 for this purpose. The minister at the time, Rev. Dolton, however, warned the members that raffles and guessing competitions should not be used as they were forms of gambling. Then the treasurer, Mr. Percy Mews, revealed that a recent law had made it illegal to sell goods or items of clothing without coupons and so it was de-



*9. Rev F J Gay, minister from 1950 to 1958.*

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*10. The church as it looked in the late 1950s. The trees had to be cut down soon after this picture was taken as their roots were undermining the foundations.*



ecided that, because of moral and legal restrictions, it would not be worthwhile to hold the fete at all!

The next minister to lead the church was Rev. F. J. Gay who commenced his pastorate in 1950. Throughout his time at Pinchbeck he was very popular. He had a special interest in working with young people, and was responsible for starting both the Girls' Life Brigade and the Boys' Brigade com-

panies at the church, both of which were very well attended. Within five years there were 70 children in the Girls' Life Brigade and 33 in the Boys' Brigade, while attendance at Sunday School had risen to 110. Rev. Gay was helped in his work by the fact that his whole family was involved in the activities. His daughters Mollie, Eileen and Christine all worked in the Girls' Life Brigade with Mollie becoming its first - and so far its only - captain. Mrs. Gay was responsible for maintaining the cradle roll of children waiting to become old enough to enter Sunday School, and for starting and leading the Baptist Women's League group. Sadly, Rev. Gay was forced to retire in 1958 due to ill-health, but the high regard in which he was held was witnessed by the fact that over 400 people contributed to his retirement gift.

After Rev. Gay, the next minister who stayed in the church for a considerable period of time was Rev. Arthur Neave who was minister of the churches at Pinchbeck and Gosberton and honorary minister at Sutterton between 1966 and 1981. It was during his period of leadership that the hall and other rooms to the rear of the church were planned and built, and his wife has kindly written the following article telling the story of this important development in the church's history.

"November 30th 1968 saw the fulfilment of a dream and the reward of much hard work, skilled planning, and sacrificial giving of time, talent and money when, after a service in the chapel at which the President of the Baptist Union, Rev. G. Beasley-Murray, was our guest speaker, Mr.

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## Three former deacons who served

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11 (Left). Mr Oliver Turner (1892-1962) with his wife. Mr Turner was a deacon for over 40 years during which time he served, in turn, as Sunday School superintendent, church



E. R. Grief was handed the key by the architect Mr. R. Stanley, and unlocked the door of our new hall, and led us inside to the beautiful new premises of hall, well-appointed kitchen, toilets, cloakroom and committee room. Previously we had had one small hall in which all our work had to be carried out - the only means of boiling a kettle being a gas ring on a shelf between the small hall and the church building - and one unusable toilet which had been in existence for over 70 years.

"The cost of this transformation was about £7,000 which, at a time when a semi-detached house could be purchased for £2,000 or less, was quite a daunting prospect for a small community. However, we sold the old manse

for £1,500 and were able to take up loans from a number of Baptist funds, promising to repay within 10 years. This was actually achieved within 8½ years and Mr. P. H. Mews, who always looked forward to that day, just lived long enough to see it come to pass.

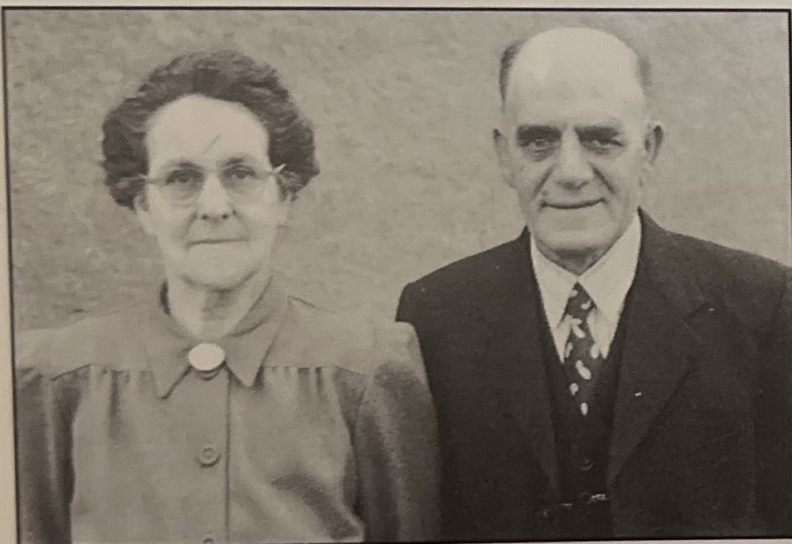
"These 8½ years were packed with very varied fund-raising efforts which deepened the fellowship and friendship of all who helped in any way. These included a 20 mile sponsored walk (later reduced to 15 miles for the benefit of the older participants), the sale of used postage stamps, and preserves made by Mrs Neave. Several flower festivals based on scriptural themes, and one honouring

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## the church faithfully for many years.

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*secretary, and treasurer. 12 (Centre). Mr Percy Mews (1889-1979) with his wife. Mr Mews also held the offices of church secretary, treasurer and Sunday School superintendent.*



*In addition he was a lay preacher and elder of the church. To the left of the picture is Mrs George Brown who also worked very hard in the church.*

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*13 (Right). Mr John Hill with his wife. Mr Hill was church treasurer and Sunday School superintendent. The tray and Communion glasses now used in the church were given by his family in his memory when he died in 1950.*



14. Beginning of a sponsored walk held in 1968 to raise funds to build the new hall. £145 was raised by this event.

15. Inside the new church hall. This picture shows Rev Arthur Neave (centre) and Mrs Gay (left) presenting Girls' Brigade awards in 1969. On the right are Captain Mollie Gay, and explorer Virginia Allison who was presenting buttonholes to the VIPs.

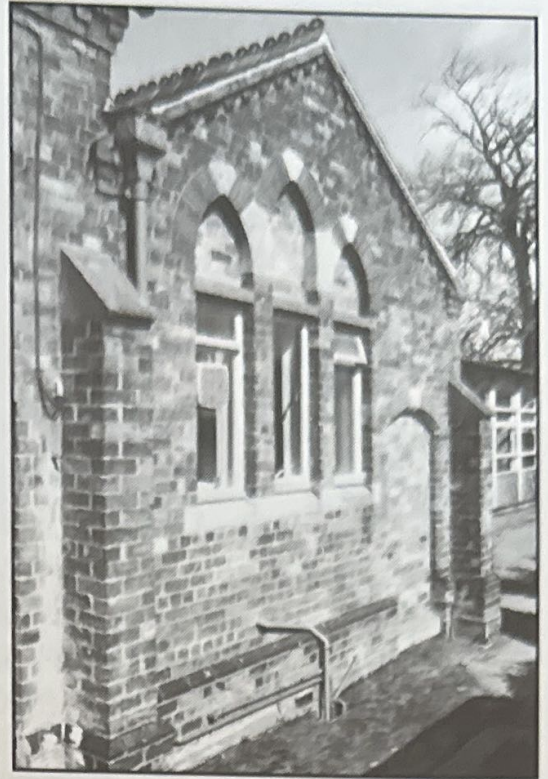


William Carey, gave much pleasure to those who visited us.

“By far the biggest effort over the years was our Tulip Time catering when, for about three weeks round about Tulip Saturday, we welcomed parties and provided them with salad and sandwich meals in our bright new hall. Over the three weeks or so we averaged 20-25 parties. The largest consisted of 98 friends (our capacity) but 45-55 was more usual, so that 800-850 meals tastefully arranged and cheerfully served represented much consecrated and dedicated

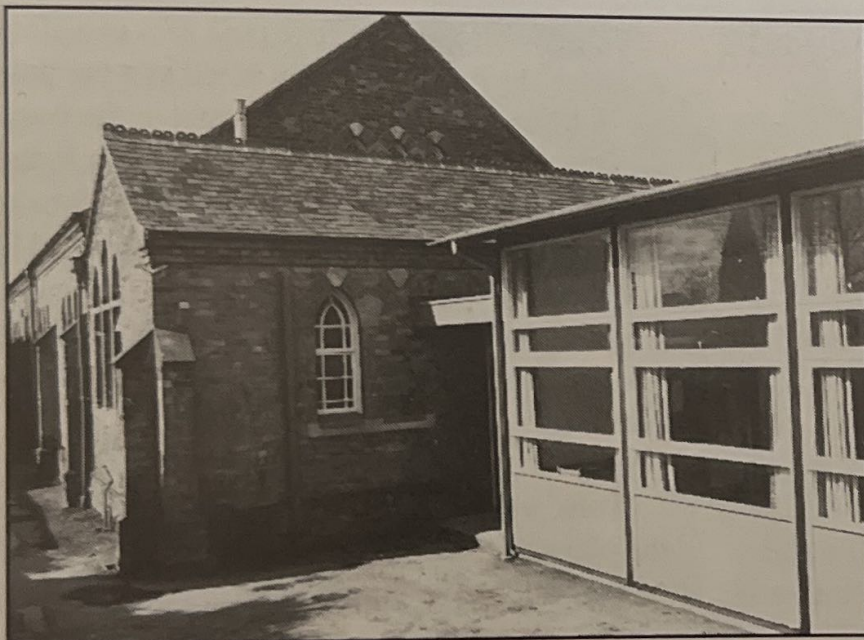
hard work and devotion.

“Every party was met off their coach by the minister and escorted through the chapel, always beautifully decorated with flowers by Mrs. A. Wells, to the hall and welcomed by the ladies of the B.W.L. As well as the meals, the produce stall offering cakes, jam, lemon curd and cauliflowers, and the work stall offering aprons, covered coat hangers and peg bags represented almost continuous work by our ladies and were



*16. The old schoolroom behind the church, showing the bricked-up doorway. This room has now been converted into a kitchen and committee room.*

*17. The new hall, opened November 1968.*



always popular with the visitors.”

In her letter Mrs. Neave also paid tribute to two people who were members of the church while she was here. This is what she says of them:

“No history of our church during the 1970s would be complete without a tribute to two of its



18. *Leaving party for Rev James Wright at the manse. Back row: Mrs Margaret Benton, Mrs Chris Schofield, Rev James Wright, Mr Roy Benton, Mr Jack Fouldes. Front row: Mrs C Parker, Mrs Jessie Creasey, Mrs Jessie Smith, Mrs Kath Fouldes.*

saints. Little Mrs. Jessie Smith loved her Lord and she loved his house. She spent long hours cleaning and beautifying it. She loved the simple things of life, and in times of illness and testing, her faith in God grew stronger, so that she was able to help many others. She loved children and was devoted to her family.

“Likewise Mr. Arthur Kirk, a quiet devoted Christian gentleman - full of good deeds and practical helpfulness. And how we relied on that practical help! From sorting out sticking curtains in the hall to catching mice and even rats! For resetting clocks and timeswitches, for keeping the boiler in working order, for dealing with locks that had been tampered with, for pulling out weeds. In these problems and

many more we have all said ‘Ask Mr. Kirk!’ and help has always been forthcoming. He was always there, backed up and encouraged by his loving and devoted wife.

“We are grateful for the memory of such Christian characters and poorer for their passing. We know they have received the Master’s, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant’.”

After the retirement of Rev. Neave in 1981, Rev. Tom Gillies and his wife Arderne arrived in Pinchbeck the following year. As a newly-qualified minister trained at Bristol Baptist College, Tom was ordained and inducted at the church on 4th September 1982. Although this was his first post as a qualified minister, he had previously acted as a lay pastor in Plymouth. He also brought to the position his experience gained as a chaplain in the British Sailors’ Society, as well as from working in catering and in a television factory. He has become well known in the village for campaigning in matters of local concern, and for his many popular appearances at school assemblies.

Tom was also responsible for organising the plans to remodel the interior of the church to make it more comfortable, practical and

attractive. These plans, unknown to him, were almost identical to those proposed twenty years earlier by Rev. Wright and rejected on grounds of cost. They involved bricking up the alcove behind the pulpit which had been designed to house a pipe organ which had never been purchased and which made the acoustics of the building very poor. A new doorway was provided to this area from the hall behind, creating a useful storage space. The pulpit was replaced by an 18" high dais stretching across most of the front of the church, and the railings were reused as a guard rail around the new open baptistry (the old baptistry had been under the floorboards and, as it had no water outlet, had to be bailed out by hand or even, on one occasion, with the help of a traction engine). A screen was erected across the front left hand corner of the church so that an overhead projector (which had been donated to the church in memory of Mr George Ferret, a former deacon, Boys' Bri-

gade Captain and Sunday School Superintendent) could be used in services. This enabled us to project the words of choruses, which were sung to guitar accompaniment, and which soon became a very popular integral part of our worship. The pews were replaced by upholstered chairs and a new vestibule was created across the back of the church.

Labour for this project was provided by unemployed trainees paid for by the Manpower Services Commission while the church paid for the materials. This was financed partly from the sale, in 1986, of the old burial ground to Hargraves' butchers. The re-opening service, when the guest speaker was Rev. Norman Walker from Skegness, and the buffet tea which followed it, took place on Saturday 30th November 1985 (17 years to the day after the opening of the church hall), and, in spite of the foggy weather, about 120 people joined in the celebrations.

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19. *At the reopening service of the newly-modernised church in November 1985, showing Mr Jack Fouldes (life deacon), Rev Tom and Mrs Arderne Gillies, and Miss Mollie Gay (deacon, church secretary and Girls' Brigade captain).*

*Photograph by kind permission of Lincolnshire Free Press.*







20. Interior of the church during a flower festival c1977. Notice the pews and raised pulpit which were removed during the 1985 modernisation.

Rev. Tom Gillies had hoped to continue as minister until he was 70 but, because of the regulations of the Home Mission Fund which paid part of his stipend, he had to retire in February 1993 at the age of 65. This date was marked by a surprise party held in his honour, where he was presented with photographic equipment and a set of engraved glasses, as an expression of love and appreciation by members of the churches of Pinchbeck, Gosberton and Sutterton, as well as the many other friends he had made in the area.

In normal circumstances he would have had to leave the area after his retirement but the church was delighted when, in what the Bap-

tist Times described as "an unusual, if not unique situation", his wife, Rev. Mrs. Arderne Gillies, became his successor.

In 1985 Arderne had begun a distance learning course with Spurgeons College with the intention of becoming more able

to assist her husband in his work. During the three years of her course she also worked part-time as an assistant at Spalding Library as well as doing a lot of work in the churches. Finally, at a special service on Saturday 14th October 1989, she was ordained and inducted as Supplementary Minister to the Fellowship.

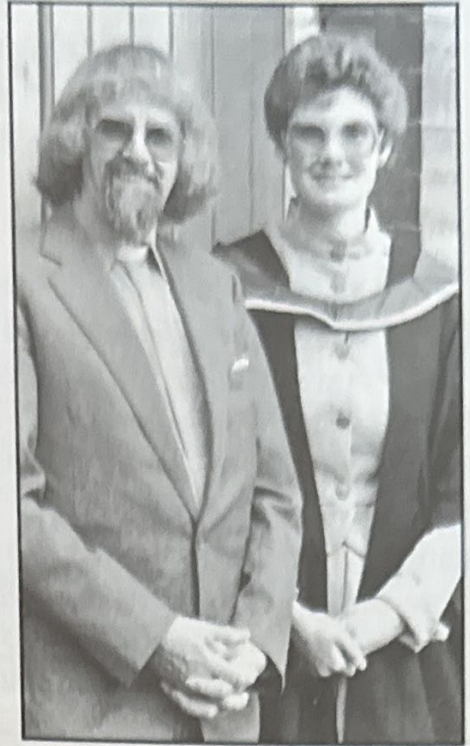
21. Interior of the church as it looks now.



After that, she took an increasingly active part in the ministry until, on 1st March 1993 she became the new full-time minister assisted by Tom in his new role as retired minister. As the Home Mission Fund no longer had sufficient resources to contribute towards a minister's stipend for the Fellowship, she generously agreed to serve the churches for a lower salary than the minimum they recommend, but the members committed themselves to making up this deficiency over the subsequent five years.

As, under these new arrangements, we now

have two ministers working in the Fellowship, we are able to offer more services to the village. Previously, each Sunday, Gosberton had a morning service, Sutterton had an afternoon service, and Pinchbeck had one in the evening. Now Pinchbeck has also started holding a morning service, which enables people in the village who are unable to come out at night to worship with us, and we are looking forward in faith to the church being able to grow and become an increasingly vital part of the community as a result.



22. Revs Tom and Arderne Gillies at Arderne's ordination and induction service in October 1989. Photograph by kind permission of Lincolnshire Free Press.



23. Congregation at the newly-started Sunday morning worship service. Mrs Janet Davey, Mrs Rhoda Kendall, Mrs Eva Hewitt, Mrs Ann Rivett, Mrs Muriel Barnett, Mrs Olive Kirk, Mr Roland Rivett, Miss Joyce Brown, Mrs Lucy Willcox.

# Young People and the Church

Children's and young people's organisations have always played an important role in the life of the church - In fact the Sunday School, which was opened by Spalding Baptist Church in January 1818, existed even before services for adults were started in the village. It is quite likely that in those early days a variety of subjects were taught as well as Scripture. This was certainly the case in many Sunday schools in the

early 19th century, and the fact that it is known that in 1851 eighty two children attended in the morning, and eighty five in the afternoon, would indicate that there would have been time to teach other subjects, especially if the same group of children attended both sessions.

In May 1868 the Sunday School celebrated its Jubilee, and the resulting festivities were reported in the Stamford Mercury. Special

services took place in church on the Sunday, and on the following Monday the children and teachers "partook of an excellent dinner of roast beef and plum pudding" in a marquee loaned to them for the occasion. After an afternoon of games, 300 people had tea in the marquee before returning to church for a public meeting.

Since that time Sunday School treats have taken different forms. In 1920 the children enjoyed tea and games at Surfleet Reservoir, and in the

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## 24. Sunday School in 1994.

*Back row: Miss Mollie Gay, Mrs Anne Latkowski, Suzanne Pearson, Heather Quinton, Mrs Jessie Creasey.*

*Middle row: Zoe Roberts, Rebecca Schofield, Andrew Pearson, Rachel Rivett, Katy Bayston, Sarah Pearson, Sonthiaya Dimsey, Emma Schofield.*

*Front row: Michelle and Victoria Stacey, (a visitor), Yasmin Latkowski, Carla Holmes, Emma Paterson, Rebecca Pearson, Thomas Bayston.*



1930s they were taken to Skegness by train. These occasions were combined outings for the Sunday Schools of the Baptist church and St. Mary's, with each church chartering its own carriages on the same train. Nowadays, travel is by coach but Skegness remains a favourite destination.

Another young people's organisation which has an important place in the life of our church is the Girls' Brigade. This started, in Pinchbeck, as the Girls' Life Brigade on 23rd October 1950, when the officers were Miss Eileen Gay, Mrs. Joy Mews and the Captain Miss Mollie Gay, who is still in post at the time of writing

in early 1994. At that first meeting there were three cadets (now known as explorers) and four juniors, but the organisation quickly became very popular, and by the end of the year consisted of 14 cadets and 16 juniors.

In 1965, nationally, the G.L.B. amalgamated with the Girls' Brigade of Ireland and the Girls' Guildry of Scotland to form what is now known as the Girls' Brigade. As each of these original organisations was founded at a different time, the current Girls' Brigade has had the opportunity to celebrate a number of special anniversaries over the years, some of which girls from our company have taken part

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*25. Girls' Life Brigade in 1952.*

*Back row: Mrs H Cock (District Commandant), Mrs J Mews, Vera Mason, Ann Priestley, Mary Bettinson, Maxine Taylor, Freda Nichols, Rita Hammond, Christine Gay, Eileen Gay, Mollie Gay (Captain), Mrs Jessie Creasey.*

*3rd row: Hazel Kirk, Judith Peck, Judith King, Margaret Fouldes, Janice Paterson, Kathleen Parkinson, Anne Tucker, Ann Wells, Jean Rolfe.*

*2nd row: Anne Mason, Sylvia Bingham, Rita Maddison, Eileen Rolfe, Gillian Gibson, Eunice Ryder, Maxine Tinkler, Judith Bagley, Iris Thurston.*

*Front row: Anne Hensman, Sandra Ransome, Kathleen Bingham, Carole Markham, Ann Barnett, Kathleen Hardy, Pat Hansard, Carole Young, Cynthia Cock.*



in. In 1962, for example, there was a Diamond Jubilee parade in London during which four Pinchbeck girls joined others from the area to march from the Mall to a special Thanksgiving Service at Westminster Abbey. Others have taken part in rallies at the Royal Albert Hall, and on 23rd July 1986 Brigadier Joanne Walsham was one of only two girls from Lincolnshire chosen to sell programmes at the wedding of Prince Andrew and Sarah Ferguson. Joanne, and earlier Valerie Tinkler, have both achieved the Queen's Award - the highest honour in the Girls' Brigade - which was presented to them at the Royal Albert Hall.

As well as enjoying their own activities, the Girls' Brigade has also benefited the church as a whole by raising money, for example, to purchase the Communion table, the lectern (which was given in memory of Cathie Stevens who used to be a member of the company), the wooden cross which is now mounted un-

der the arch at the front of the church, and a set of easy chairs for the committee room.

At other periods of its history the church has had other organisations for young people as the need has arisen. During Rev. Gay's period of ministry a Boys' Brigade company was started, run by the minister and Mr. Percy Mews. Rev. Gay commented at the church AGM in 1952 that "*the boys of this village are the toughest he has ever come across in his experience, but they are gradually getting some discipline and order into them!*" Youth clubs and young people's fellowships have been provided when there have been sufficient numbers of young people in the church, and more recently, Liz Styles and Chris Patman have run a Boys' Club to cater for boys up to the age of 11. The newest children's group is the Pram Service, run by Rev. Tom Gillies, Miss Mollie Gay, Mrs Sheila Flomen and Mrs Irene Crawford, where toddlers and their moth-



26. *Pram Service mothers with their children. Tracey Mitchell with Leanne, Anne-Marie Marsh with Nathan, Chloe and Lucy, Mair Goodge with Rhian and Adam, Pamela Hill with Natasha, and Judith Cowell with Sonya.*

ers can meet to enjoy stories and activities to introduce them to Jesus.

While the provision of different types of young people's organisations has changed over

the years to cater for changing needs, their aim has always been the same - to introduce children and young people to God who loves them and wants to give them the best and most satisfying life possible.

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## A Year In The Life...

**S**o far in this story of Pinchbeck Baptist Church we have looked only at the major events which have helped to shape its history. But the day-by-day life of the church is just as important, as it is during its regular programme that most of the work is done in teaching and caring for the congregation, and building them up from a collection of separate individuals into a united body whose members look after one another and seek to share the good news of Jesus with their friends.

What, then, is life at Pinchbeck Baptist Church like today? To answer this question, here is the normal weekly programme of meetings where, even if you have never been before, you will be very welcome.

<b>Sunday</b>	10.30-11.30am	Morning worship (including Communion on fourth Sunday of the month) and Sunday School
	6.30-7.30pm	Evening worship (including Communion on second Sunday of the month)
<b>Monday</b>	6.00-7.30pm	Girls' Brigade explorers (for girls aged 5-7 years)
<b>Tuesday</b>	2.15-2.45pm	Pram service (for mums and toddlers)
	8.00-9.30pm	Bible Study (held at the manse)
<b>Thursday</b>	2.30-3.30pm	Women's Fellowship (this fortnightly meeting, held at the manse, is for Bible study, prayer and fellowship)
	6-8pm	Girls' Brigade Juniors, Seniors and Brigaders (for girls aged from 8 years upwards)

In addition, a number of special meetings and events are held during the year which give opportunities for people to get together - sometimes to worship God, sometimes to raise money for special purposes, and sometimes just to enjoy one another's company. To give an idea of the variety of these occasions, here is a selection of the events of 1993 - the last full year before the writing of this chapter.

**Sat. 9th January - New Year Meal**

About 40 members and friends of the Fellowship met at Pinchbeck to enjoy a three course dinner to celebrate the new year. This was prepared by Mrs. Jessie Creasey and her group of helpers including members of the Girls' Brigade who acted as waitresses.

**Sun. 10th January - Baptism Service**

The evening service on this date was very special as Mrs. Chris Patman witnessed to her faith by believers' baptism.

**Sat. 27th February - Retirement Party**

A large crowd of friends met for the retirement party of Rev. Tom Gillies. Members of the three churches of the Fellowship provided a buffet meal, and Tom was presented with photographic equipment and a set of engraved glasses to mark the occasion. The evening was designed as a surprise, and - to

everyone's amazement - Tom genuinely did not know anything about it until the last minute!

**Sun. 7th March - Fellowship Service**

Revs. Harry and Frances Godden, joint secretaries of the East Midlands Baptist Association, led worship at the special service which was held to welcome Rev. Arderne Gillies as the new full-time minister of the Fellowship. Members from each of the churches of the Fellowship, as well as Rev. David Hill representing Pinchbeck Parish Church, attended this service, which included Communion, and all were invited to stay behind afterwards for coffee.

**Tues. 9th March - Social Event**

On this occasion Mr. Roy Withyman, a local solicitor, gave a very entertaining talk on his experiences in the legal profession.



27. *Rev Tom Gillies' retirement. Miss Mollie Gay, Mr Colin Pearson (from the church at Sutterton), Mrs Sheila Flomen, Rev Arderne Gillies, Mrs Eileen Baxter (from the church at Gosberton), and Rev Tom Gillies. Photograph by kind permission of Lincolnshire Free Press.*

**Sat. 13th March - Spring Charities Fayre**  
Mrs. Olive Kirk organised a stall in aid of church funds at this event which took place at the South Holland Centre in Spalding.

**Fri. 19th-Sun. 21st March - Fellowship House Party**

Sixteen members of the Fellowship met at Launde Abbey in Leicestershire for this special weekend which consisted of worship, group discussions and teaching sessions led jointly by Revs. Tom and Arderne Gillies on the theme of 'Love'. Saturday afternoon was free, and most people used the time to explore the abbey grounds. Then Miss Mollie Gay organised an evening of games. Worship on Sunday morning included a very moving Communion service, and in the afternoon everyone returned to Pinchbeck where some of the ladies had prepared tea for the group before the evening service.

**Thurs. 1st April - Girls' Brigade Display**

After receiving their awards on this occasion, the girls entertained the audience with a programme of items such as action songs, Maori stick dancing, and a sketch illustrating their motto of 'Seek, Serve and Follow Christ'.

**Tues. 6th April - Social Event**

This took the form of a fashion show staged by J. J. Family Fashions shop in the village. The hall was filled to capacity and, apart from being an enjoyable evening, it helped to raise funds for both the church and the Girls' Brigade.

**Fri. 16th April - Trip To See *Jairus' Daughter***

A number of members of the Girls' Brigade with their parents, officers and friends joined

a coach party from the area to go to Leicester for a performance of a new musical, *Jairus' Daughter*, which had been specially written to celebrate the centenary of the Girls' Brigade movement. Several Pinchbeck girls took part in this performance as members of the chorus.

**Sat. 8th May - Spring Fayre**

This took place in the hall with various members of the church running stalls selling items such as cakes, groceries and fancy goods. A number of games and competitions were also organised to help raise money for church funds.

**Sun. 9th May - Baptism Service**

This was another special service when Mrs. Lucy Willcox and Johanne Rivett witnessed to their faith by believers' baptism.

**Tues. 18th May - Sponsored Knit-In**

This annual event, organised by Mrs. Olive Kirk, took the form of a coffee evening at the home of Mrs. Jessie Creasey. Apart from producing goods to be sold on future work stalls, this proved a very successful event in raising money for church funds.

**Sun. 13th June - Pinchbeck Carnival**

Continuing a fairly recent tradition, on the Sunday of Carnival weekend there were plans to hold an open-air service, jointly with St. Mary's, on the school field. Unfortunately, it poured with rain all weekend so this was not possible, so the service was held in the parish church instead.

**Sat. 19th June - Barbecue**

About 25 people met in the garden of the manse for a barbecue provided and



prepared by John and Ursula Chester. Everyone enjoyed the evening, and the event also raised some money for church funds.

**Sat. 26th June - Fellowship Garden Party**

This annual event was held in Miss Mollie Gay's garden. There were several stalls in the garden where a variety of goods were for sale, and there was a number of competitions too. The event was opened by Fiona Chester, the Deputy Tulip Queen for the year.

**Sun. 27th June - Sunday School Anniversary**

In the afternoon the children presented a programme of readings, poems and songs based on the theme of 'The Sea'. This was followed by a buffet tea in the hall before the evening service.

**Sat. 21st August - Barbecue**

This evening in the manse garden was again organised by John and Ursula Chester, but this time the proceeds went to Fellowship funds. The weather forecast predicted rain,

but this did not begin until the last guest had gone home, so it was a very happy evening for the forty people who came.

**Sun 19th-Mon. 20th September - Harvest Weekend**

This celebration began with the morning Family Service when the Sunday School children added their gifts to those already given by church members. The church harvest thanksgiving service then took place in the evening while, on the Monday evening, about thirty people met for a sausage supper. After the meal some of the produce was sold, and the rest was donated to Two Trees and Brun Lea, two residential homes in the village.

**Sat. 16th October - Sponsored Hymn-singing**

This event was held to raise funds for the Fellowship. Apart from singing favourite hymns, there were organ solos to listen to and food and drinks to enjoy together.



28. *Helpers at the Christmas fayre. Mrs Rhoda Kendall, Mrs Ruskin, Mrs Lily Green, Mrs Ann Rivett, Mrs Olive Kirk, Rachel Rivett, Mrs Irene Crawford, Mrs Jessie Creasey, Mrs Liz Styles, Mrs Eva Hewitt, Mr Roland Rivett.*

29. The marathon mince-pie bake.

Standing: Rev Ardenne Gillies, Mrs Irene Crawford, Mrs Ann Rivett, Mrs Eileen Fell, Mrs Jessie Creasey, Miss Mollie Gay.  
Sitting: Rachel Rivett, Mrs Rhoda Kendall, Johanne Rivett, Mrs Ruskin, Laura Coles.

Photograph by kind permission of Lincolnshire Free Press



**Sun. 7th November - Girls' Brigade Enrolment Service**

This annual service also included the re-dedication of the officers - Captain Mollie Gay, Mrs. Jessie Creasey and Miss Helen Thompson. Mrs. Ann Rivett was also welcomed as a newly appointed lieutenant.

**Fri. 19th November - Jumble Sale**

This popular event was organised by Mrs. Chris Patman and Mrs. Liz Styles and her family to raise money for church funds.

**Sat. 27th November - Christmas Fayre**

The hall was decorated with a festive theme for this occasion, and many people turned out to buy from the stalls. Santa's grotto was particularly popular with the children!

**Tues. 14th December - Fellowship Christmas Party**

Games for this event were organised by Miss Mollie Gay, and refreshments by Rev. Ar-

denne Gillies and Mrs. Sheila Flomen. Sadly, not many people were able to be there, but those who came enjoyed themselves.

**Sat. 18th December - Marathon Mince-Pie Bake**

This event was organised in the church kitchen by Mrs. Jessie Creasey and her team of helpers. During the day they produced 140 dozen mince-pies - all to order, and the proceeds were added to church funds.

**Sun. 19th December - Carol Services**

As this was the Sunday before Christmas, carol services were held on this date. In the morning the Sunday School children took part in the service in drama, mime and song, and in the evening several members of the congregation took part, reading sections of the Christmas story, and everyone enjoyed coffee and mince-pies afterwards.

**Fri. 24th December - Midnight Communion**

This special Communion service was held at the church in preparation for Christmas Day.

# **In Conclusion**

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**S**o this brings the story of the church right up to date. 1994 and 1995 promise to be special years for Pinchbeck Baptist Church as we look forward to celebrating together the 150th anniversary of the denomination in the village and the centenary of our present building. Looking back, much has changed over these years. Mid-Victorian society is very different from that of the late 20th century, and church services, activities, and even buildings have had to alter to meet the needs of the changing community.

Through all the changes, however, one thing has remained constant - and that is the reason for the church's existence. God teaches us in his word that '*God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*' (John 3:16), and it is the continuing duty and privilege of the local church to make sure that everyone in the community hears this good news and is given the opportunity to respond to God's love.

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