

WELCOME TO CASTLETOWN METHODIST CHURCH



A GUIDE TO WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

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THE CHURCH - why are we here?

The Church is one of 8 [Methodist](#) places of worship around Sunderland. The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission.

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, encouraged people to do certain practices that would help them encounter God. Some of the practices were 'spiritual' like praying and reading the Bible. Others involved practical action to help people. All of these 'means of grace' were ways of meeting God and being transformed.

We aim in Christian love to encourage local people in God's work, in church, through worship and in service of the local community.

THE PEOPLE – who might you meet? (See the last page for more detail about roles)

- **MEMBERS/NON-MEMBERS:** People who come to worship on a Sunday every week. Now twenty people have taken up membership and attend weekly. Becoming a 'member' is a way of saying that you belong to and support your local Methodist Church and are willing to show publicly your faith in Jesus. Being a member also means you can hold certain responsibilities e.g. become the Treasurer. We also have a handful of non-members who want to worship regularly in our Church. Our Church is here for all and anyone who needs us at any time in their lives.
- **STEWARDS:** Volunteers with roles who are also Trustees.
- **MINISTER:** the Minister is employed to guide the Church spiritually, take special ceremonies such as Weddings and is a Trustee.
- **LAY PASTOR:** The Lay Pastor is a volunteer who provides care and support to members of the Church in a variety of ways and is a Trustee.
- **LOCAL PREACHERS:** Volunteers who have taken training to enable them to lead worship on a regular basis across the Methodist Churches in Sunderland.

- **TRUSTEES:** who sit on the Church Council and take responsibility for managing the Church

A WORSHIP SERVICE – what happens?

When you come into the Church for a weekly service (**Sundays 10.30 – 11.30am**) – you will be welcomed in by Heather, who will offer you a Song book and invite you to take a seat.

You can sit anywhere and there are tables at the back with toys/colouring books for any children who are always welcome in the service. At the moment we don't have a Sunday School for children, but we are looking to have regular Family focussed Services in the future similar to our annual Christingle Service.



Colin, one of our Stewards will start the service with any Notices – usually about activities that are coming up in the next few weeks. Then the Minister or Lay Pastor or a Local Preacher will lead everyone in worship.

This service usually lasts an hour and involves:

- singing up to five songs,
- prayers,
- a couple of Bible readings and
- a special address or message.

During the service, a voluntary collection for any gifts of money will be taken to help support the Church. Envelopes are available for anyone to put their money in and place on the collection plate which a Steward brings around everyone during the service. How much people give is an individual decision with no expectation. If you do not have an envelope, just put your cash on the plate and we can arrange for envelopes for the future, or you can arrange to pay by Direct Debit. To do this ask Colin, the Church Treasurer – contacts on the last page.

There will be occasional services, usually when a Minister is taking the service, which will include the opportunity for anyone to receive Holy Communion. This is when the bread and wine are declared to represent the body and blood of Christ and are shared.

A Steward will invite anyone who wants to take communion to the rail at the front of the Church. When at the rail, you can kneel or stand, with your hands cupped together and the Minister will come around each individual and place a wafer (to represent the bread) in your hands. The Minister will repeat this giving each individual a thumb size glass of non-alcoholic wine for you to drink. After drinking just put the glass in the space/hole in front of you on the communion rail where it is collected later. The Minister will then close with a prayer and ask you to go back to your seat.

If you do not want to receive this, you can remain seated or have the option of a Blessing. This is where the Minister will quietly say a short prayer with you instead of giving you bread and wine if you indicate so to them when you are at the rail. Children who come to the rail often receive a Blessing instead of taking the bread and wine.

We are increasingly using technology within our Service. For example, we use technology to play the music for the songs and display the words on the large TV screen as well as using visuals to aid any Message given. We do have an electric organ and electric piano, but we struggle to get someone to regularly play these, so the technology helps.

At the end of every service, we all say **THE GRACE** together turning to each other – this is usually on the screen:

The Grace

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, evermore.

Amen

After the service, refreshments are always available usually served by Irene our Steward or one of our regular attenders. Tea; coffee; juice and biscuits are usually available, or cake for special occasions! Most people stay for a drink and a chat. However, this is a choice, and we understand some people will need to leave straight after the service.

If at any point during the service you feel overwhelmed, just get up and go into the lobby where there is a bench to sit and have some time for yourself. One of the Stewards will come out and check if you need anything. If at the end of the service, you want to know anything, please just ask one of the Stewards. Pictures and names of the Stewards are at the back of this brochure.

There will be at least one Sunday every 3 months when the service will not take place in our Church but at one of the other 7 Churches to enable all

Methodists across the city to meet in worship. At least once a year that meeting will be in our Church. A notice saying when the service will be elsewhere will always be on the Noticeboard outside the Church and posted at the time on our Church Facebook page – see contact on back page.

SPECIAL CEREMONIES: christenings (or baptisms), weddings; funerals; blessings – how to?

The Church is available for these ceremonies, including same sex marriages.

Christenings (or Baptisms) usually take place any Sunday after the service around 12 pm and there is no fee, whilst a donation is always appreciated.

Weddings usually take place on a Saturday, but other days may be possible. There is a fee for the Church (this changes every few years but is currently £200 and an additional fee for the Minister).

Funerals usually take place during the week and there is a fee for the Church (this changes every few years but is currently £300 and an additional fee for the Minister).

If you would like to hold any of these in our Church, please contact either the Church Secretary (Debbie Burnicle) or the Minister (Rev John Purdy) – see last page for contact details.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES – what do we offer?

The Trustees and other volunteers meet every 4/5 weeks to plan activities to serve the local community. An annual calendar of events is produced and available in the Church and on our Facebook page. Each event is also advertised separately in and outside the Church on the Noticeboard and on our Facebook page.

We provide a **Drop In** every Tuesday from 9.30-11 am which is an opportunity for:

- some quiet time or

- to light a candle and pray for someone or
- to share your concerns with someone who will listen or
- come for a chat and a cup of tea and biscuit or
- an opportunity to see inside our Church.

Activities include **quarterly Coffee Mornings**, with home baked cakes and preloved clothes for sale; raffle prizes as well as plenty of refreshments and tables to sit and catch up with friends. There is a small entry fee covering unlimited refreshments.

Regular Concerts are held – both brass bands and choirs. Ticket prices are kept low enough to cover the costs of hiring the entertainment and a raffle is also generally available which generates funds for the Church.

Free Family Fun Activities a few times a year – including football, bouncy castle outdoors and craft activities in doors with snacks available.

Annual Craft Fayre usually November – providing lots of opportunities for Christmas gifts, made by local Crafters.

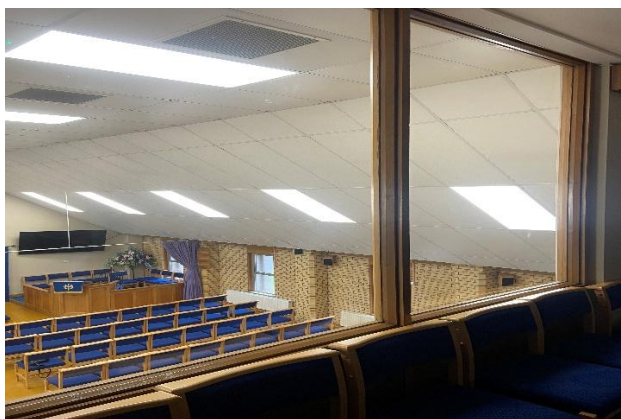
Community Hub for other organisations to provide key services. In the past we had monthly Citizens Advice Bureau sessions and are currently hosting a 14-week Strength and Balance Programme provided by the Sunderland Foundation of Light.

SPACE FOR HIRE- what do I need to know?

We have a modern, multi- purpose building, 26 years old with dedicated car parking, disabled access and baby changing facilities. Whilst we do not have a separate Church Hall, our worship space in the Church holds over one hundred seated people downstairs. This can be converted into a large hall when the individual seats are moved to the side or front of the building behind a curtained area. This space enables Coffee Mornings, Craft Fayres, Dances etc. We have 11-fold away large tables and a few small tables which are available for such events. A small but functioning kitchen with servery into the main space is available, along with crockery and cooking utensils.



There is additional seating upstairs – approximately twenty seats which provides either space for a meeting or acts as a viewing platform into the main church. This space has glass windows and sound system enabling a connection with the main space downstairs; however, this is only accessible via stairs.



The main space is available for £15 an hour, with an extra charge of £5 an hour if bouncy castles are used. The space can be used for meetings, concerts, dances, children's parties etc however, alcohol cannot be consumed on the premises.

We hope you have found this Brochure helpful.

CHURCH COUNCIL TRUSTEES:



Rev John Purdy – Minister



Margaret Wright – Lay Pastor



Joe Bell – Senior Steward



Doreen Bell - Steward



Debbie Burnicle- Secretary



Margaret Frankland -Property Steward



Colin Burnicle - Treasurer



Heather Tucknutt - Steward



Irene Tucknutt - Steward



Margaret Parkin - Steward

Contact Tel: Secretary Debbie Burnicle 07963239231 or what's app or email debbie.burnicle@gmail.com

Minister Rev John Purdy 0191 7160761 or email john.purdy@methodist.org.uk

Facebook Page: [Castletown Methodist Church](#)