

## **Benington Methodist Church**

Notes about the church for visiting Minister and Local Preachers.

### **GENERAL POINTS**

#### Congregation

Numbers average 8 but can be up to 12. Unfortunately, there are no young couples with children but very occasionally a child or children may come with an adult. Only a few of the congregation actually live in Benington. I think it would be fair to say we are a friendly congregation and appreciative of the preachers who minister to us week by week.

#### Music

We have two hymn books:  
Methodist Hymns and Psalms (1983)  
Complete Mission Praise (2005).  
Large print books are available for both versions.

#### Organists

We do not now have a regular organist. We do also have a digital piano for accompaniment, and when with us one of our members plays the organ and key board.

We are appreciative that members from our sister churches in the Circuit occasionally come and play the piano. Otherwise, accompaniment is electronic.

#### Communion

The communion prayers are taken from the Methodist Prayer Book c1986 (usually referred to as the 'blue book'). Traditionally, we start at page B12, but are happy for the communion service to all be from the Prayer Book.

When the bread and wine is offered, the members will wait until all have received the bread, and eat as one. The same applies to the wine, and return to their pews after the blessing.

#### Readers

We have a team of about 6 readers all of whom welcome advance notice of a reading. One or two are very reluctant to be given notice of a reading just prior to a service. Ideally, we would normally only read two of the three weekly readings.

#### Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP)

The churches in Benington (Anglican and Methodist) and Walkern (Anglican and URC) (plus some Roman Catholics although there is no RC church in either village) are now constituted as an LEP. An authorised Ecumenical Team has been elected and meets three times a year, to organise joint events and services.

Otherwise, our involvement in Benington affairs is limited to the Summer Fair. The Anglicans are more active than us with weekly coffee mornings, monthly lunches, children activities and a monthly toddlers group. A few of our members are involved in these activities. It does not help that the majority of the Methodist congregation do not live in Benington.

There are Ecumenical services held on the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in the month around the Partnership.

## **PRIOR TO A SERVICE**

Please telephone Peter Davies, Church Steward (01438 227293 or e-mail [peter.davies50@ntlworld.com](mailto:peter.davies50@ntlworld.com)) with hymns and readings on Thursday at the latest before the service you will be taking.

Peter can also tell you about any special items for prayer.

## **SUNDAY SERVICE**

### Arrival

The church is situated on Whempstead Road (post code SG2 7DE) near the firm of agricultural engineers called Ernest Doe. There are plenty of parking spaces behind the church. There is a side door, which leads into the vestry. All services are now morning services (unless otherwise stated) and start at 10.30 a.m.

### Before the Service

Some local preachers greet the congregation before the service, which is always appreciated.

It would be useful to have copies of the order of service to give to the steward for the hymn board, the readers and the congregation.

There is a wireless microphone/loudspeaker system and the preacher will need to fasten a small microphone to his or her clothes. The microphone has an on/off button. The loudspeaker system is switched on when the preacher and steward enter the main body of the church. There is a lectern for the notices and readings which, has its own microphone which can be turned on or off as required.

The steward will read a prayer from the vestry prayer book just prior to the commencement of the service.

### The Service

A steward welcomes the congregation and preacher, reading out the usually brief notices before the start of the service.

We are used to a more traditional form of service but I do not think there would be any objections to anything a little different from time to time. We do not use an overhead projector for hymns or for talks but the Anglicans have this equipment and we could probably borrow it if required.

The collection can be taken at any time during the service and one of the stewards is responsible for this or a member of the congregation. There is a brass plate for the preacher to receive the offertory. There is no obligation to use the plate if you prefer not to.

### After the Service

Most preachers will try and speak to each member of the congregation after the service.

Tea and coffee is served after the service.

The congregation like to stay and chat after the service and catch up with each other's news.

**Thank you to all preachers who conduct services for us. All your hard work is very much appreciated.**

January 2014