

Christchurch

Baptist

...BECAUSE PEOPLE MATTER TO GOD

Church profile



Christchurch is a lively, biblically-based, community-focussed church seeking to reach people who are not used to church and help them grow as disciples.



Our Vision

Our heartbeat

We exist as a church because people matter to God

That's why we want to introduce each person to Jesus and invite them to follow him.

Our dream

... is to see lives and communities throughout Welwyn Garden City transformed by God's love.

Our strategy

as well as our attractional model of church, we have heard the call to...

Go serve

showing God's love in practical ways

Go build

relationships with Jesus at the centre

Go celebrate

together in worship

Our Values

There are five W.O.R.D.S. that sum up the things that we value - they are at the core of who we seek to be and how we do what we do

Worship

Christ-centred

When we gather we want our worship to be Christ-centred enabling people to encounter God through words, songs, prayers, images and actions in a biblical and contemporary way. This flows out into our daily lives as each day we seek to honour Jesus in what we do and the way that we do it.

Outreach

Outward focused

God commands us to go and to reach out with His love - being prepared to demonstrate that love in practical ways to tell of that love whenever we have the opportunity. Our focus is outward - to engage in mission with our neighbour along the street as well as across the world.

Relationships

Relationally strong

Every person matters, whatever their age and background. So building a sense of belonging and developing healthy relationships is core to how we function. We believe that life-change happens best in relationship with others whether on Sundays, small groups, or twos and threes.

Discipleship

Spiritually growing

Our desire is to be a "next steps" community - where each person takes steps to grow spiritually and develop a more Christ-like character. This includes being able to relate and apply the timeless truths of God's word to our workplaces or the tasks that fill our waking hours.

Serving

Servant hearted

It is important to us that everyone plays their part in serving others - identifying the unique ways God shapes each of us for ministry. We want to give generously...of our time, our abilities, our spiritual gifts and our financial resources to see God's Kingdom come.

Vision 100



In Sept 2028, Christchurch will be 100 years old!

As we work towards this milestone, we believe that God is calling us to be

A beacon of hope in Jesus' name

People who are led by Jesus,
who live like Jesus,
and lead people to Jesus.

Appointing a Second Minister

Vision 100 will guide our strategic priorities over the next 3-5 years and the pastor we appoint will play an essential role in helping this vision become reality.

We have a vacancy for a Second Minister who will share pastoral leadership for Christchurch with the Senior Minister and be an integral member of the Leadership Team.

The person we're looking for

- Theologically trained and spiritually mature individual with leadership experience
- Good organisation and administrative skills
- Excellent communication skills
- A creative thinker
- A people person, able to enthuse and enable others
- A team player with a willingness to learn
- An able preacher, with the ability to teach the Bible in ways that are accessible for people not used to church and applicable to our everyday lives
- Experience of ministry in a mid-large size church would be beneficial



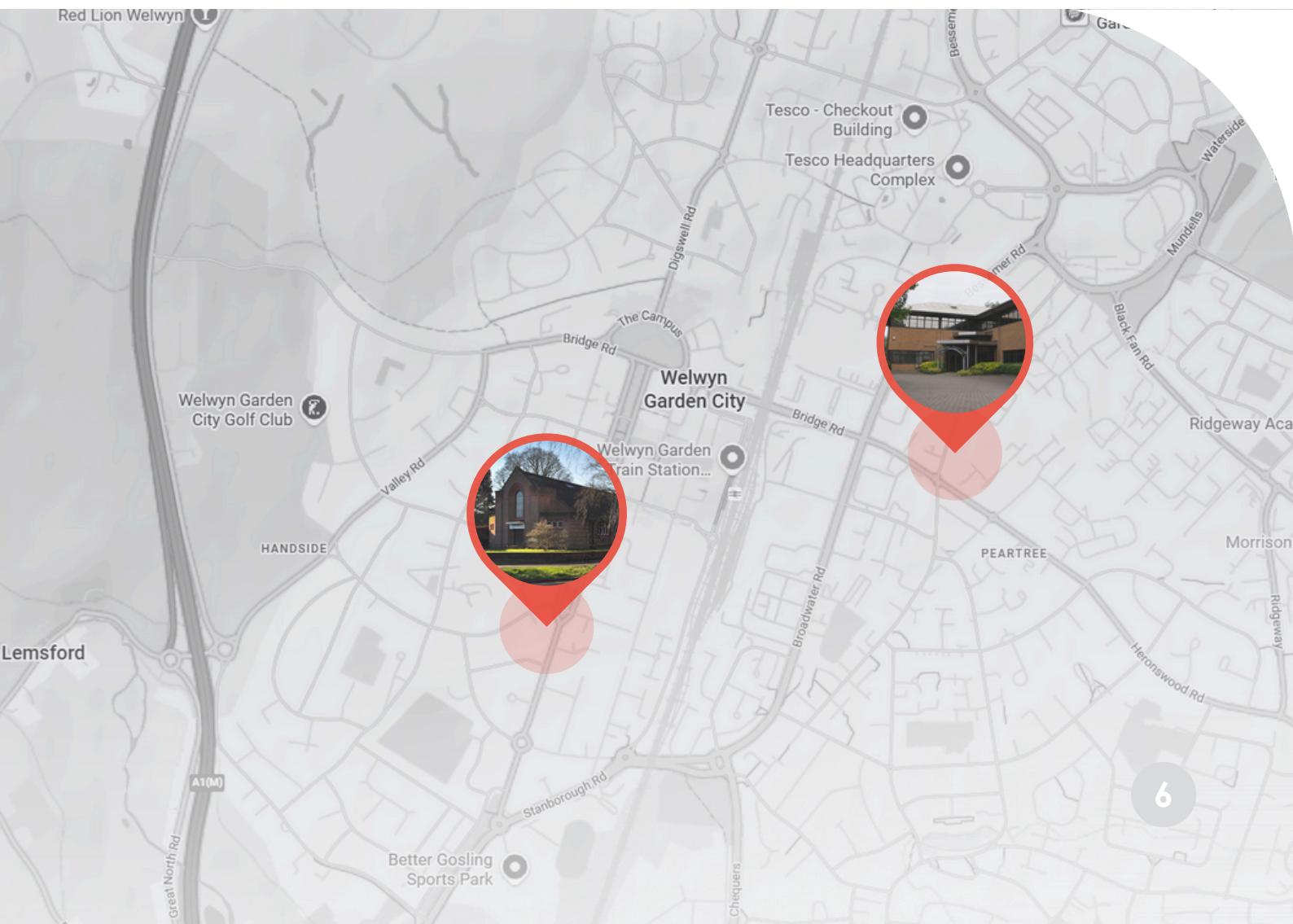
Congregations



We currently operate from two sites, Parkway, the original church building, and Peartree, a refurbished office block, each about a 10-minute walk from the town centre. We welcome an average Sunday morning congregation of 280 children & adults across the two sites with a current membership of 196.

The congregation includes both families and many single people. Each age group is well-represented and there is a diverse ethnic mix.

Christchurch is committed to serving God within the local community. We have a good reputation for ministry with children, young people and senior citizens and we cooperate actively with other local churches. The local council are very positive about the work we do. We have a relational approach to overseas mission support. We are a silver Ecochurch with ambitions for gold.



Sunday services

Sunday morning services begin at 9.30am at Parkway and at 10.30am at Peartree. The structure at both is the same beginning with an all-age section together for 20 minutes, before the children and young people leave for their groups whilst those who remain have about 50 minutes or so of worship and teaching. There are several different bands and a variety of people lead the worship. We have the same preacher at both sites, who joins the Peartree service part way through.

The Sunday morning service at Peartree is streamed live via our YouTube channel each week, and available afterwards for people to catch up with a service they have missed. It is possible to access these services through BSL, and the deaf community within Christchurch is gradually increasing.

Once a month on a Sunday afternoon we have a Songs of Praise gathering in Parkway with tea, cake and hymns which has drawn a different congregation. There are occasional Sunday evening gatherings for worship or prayer and healing.





Ministries

Prayer and fellowship

We believe that small groups are an essential ingredient for healthy church life and an important building block of our pastoral care. Weekly life groups meet in different homes across Welwyn Garden City and the neighbouring areas, and provide the chance for fellowship, mutual support, prayer and Bible study, and are attended by just under half the congregation.

For the last two summers we paused life groups to give the opportunity to build additional relationships. Over 100 people each year signed up for a wide range of activities from table tennis to dancing, bird walks to chess. An early morning prayer meeting meets every Tuesday.

For Men and Women

A monthly Saturday morning men's breakfast attracts about 25 for food, a speaker and some discussion. Sistersoul, for women, meets about once a term for a gathering with food and an external speaker, and runs occasional fun gatherings such as a Christmas craft evening.

Children and Young People

As well as Sunday morning groups, many church-family teenagers in years 10 to 13 attend a small group on Sunday evening. Youth work and children's work is resourced by a team of volunteers led by our Children & Families Ministry Leader (p/t) and our Youth Ministry Leader (a shared role with 'Young Life'). Both these individuals will report to the minister appointed.

The Mix, a Friday night activity for school years 7-9 attracts up to 20 young people each week, about half of these have no other church contact.

An annual youth camp draws young people from all the groups together for a weekend in the spring.



Community

The church buildings are used extensively throughout the week for church and community activities. In addition to the children's and young people's groups, other regular activities include:

Seniors

Harvesters meets in the afternoon every other Monday with a speaker or an activity.

Reachout is a chair-based exercise group every Tuesday and Thursday primarily attended by people who don't come to church.

I Picture This is a monthly Art appreciation class.

The Wider Community

Body & Soul serves coffee and lunches in a café style room at Parkway with a fully equipped kitchen on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Staffed by volunteers, it is highly regarded locally for both quality of food and the warmth of the welcome and attracts both seniors and some parents of the pre-school children.

Pearmtree is open as a safe space on Tuesday afternoon for anyone who wants to drop by for a cup of tea and a listening ear under the heading Christchurch Community Space.

A Community fun day runs once a year at one of the sites to which all are welcome. Food and refreshments are provided for free alongside various family activities. Over 300 attended a recent one at Parkway including the mayor, the local MP and various councillors.

Children

Parkway Crawlers and *Pearmtree Tots* provide a parent and toddler group session every Tuesday and Thursday morning in Parkway and Pearmtree respectively – both are popular with parents and carers from the local community.

Fun 4 Families is a monthly Saturday morning event for families with children aged 0-11.

Other special events are run in addition through the year.

An independently run pre-school managed by one of our members operates out of the Parkway premises during the week.



Evangelism

Alpha courses are run on a regular basis for those who want to find out more about the Christian faith. We have also run shorter courses which feed into Alpha such as Big Questions & Life Questions.

Sunday mornings are geared up to be accessible to those not used to church, and special events - including some specifically for men or women - give us opportunities to invite friends and neighbours.

Organisation

We are committed to the Baptist concept of government through the church meeting and meet at least quarterly.

There is an elected leadership team (trustees) of nine team leaders covering the various key activities of the church - arranged around the five key purposes of worship, outreach, relationships (fellowship), discipleship and serving, plus finance, property, administration and digital operations.

Interchurch relationships

We endeavour to play our part in the Baptist Union, sending delegates to national and local area conferences, and facilitate meetings of local leaders. We are committed to support the Baptist Home Mission Fund and BMS World Mission as well as other selected inter-denominational causes.

We are members of Baptists Together (BUGB) and the Evangelical Alliance.

We work in partnership with local churches with events such as an open-air Good Friday service.

We encourage and support our members in training for Christian service and currently have two members progressing towards Baptist ministry.

We have a relational model for overseas mission, and currently have several church members on long term assignments. A number have also given short term service overseas (e.g. every three years or so since 2009 we have sent a mission team to Arequipa in Peru).

Church buildings and staff



Staff

In addition to the two pastors, current staff include: Children and Families Ministry Leader, Youth Ministry Leader Worker; a role shared with Young Life, Parish Nurse, Administrator and Caretaker. All the team members serve both sites.

Minister's accommodation

We will rent a suitable property in Welwyn Garden City or provide a housing allowance as part of the remuneration package including council tax and water rates.

Parkway

A main hall, built in 1939, is a multi-purpose room - it is carpeted, and accommodates up to 180 on moveable chairs. It is equipped with a baptistry, and a full PA system with sound desk, AV control desk (songs, videos and presentation software) and a 'loop' system for the hard-of-hearing. The building is licensed for Christian marriage.

There is also a café-style room, served by a kitchen, and the Christchurch Community Centre (CCC) provides a large hall which can be divided by a moveable soundproof partition. Other accommodation includes a meeting room and a quiet prayer room with seating for counselling and small group meetings.

Peartree

A former office block on Tewin Road which we purchased and repurposed in 2015 as a church & community centre. Downstairs there is the main sanctuary seating up to 240 also equipped with a full PA and vision system for live streaming and a hearing loop, a large cafe area and kitchen, the church office, and various meeting rooms. Upstairs are the staff offices, a youth space, a children's space and a meeting room. There is parking for 50 on site with an additional 50 spaces next door, through a reciprocal arrangement with the NHS headquarters. The building is registered as a place of worship and licensed for Christian marriage.



Background information

History and information about the town

A Baptist congregation, affiliated to the Baptist Union, began to meet in Welwyn Garden City (WGC) in the late 1920s soon after the town was established. The Parkway church building was erected in 1939, on the town's main central avenue.

WGC now contains many professional families, with a number commuting into London. However, WGC also contains some of the most deprived wards in Hertfordshire, located in the newer social housing, mainly on the East side of the town. The Peartree site is located adjacent to this ward.

Today, Christchurch is a biblically based church, committed to being accessible to those not used to church and the development of spiritual and practical gifts. Membership is open to any who agree with our Statement of Faith and our covenant of relationships within the church family.

Recent history

The Senior Minister started his ministry at Christchurch in Sept 2009, and as Christchurch grew the decision was made to hold two morning services at Parkway from January 2011 to provide space to welcome people wanting to explore the Christian faith and Christians moving into the area. As numbers continued to increase, and movement of people in-between services became more difficult, we sought to bring the two morning services together in a location off site.

In January 2013 we began meeting on Sunday mornings as one congregation in a rented former office block on Broadwater Road. As numbers grew, we first appointed a second minister later that year.

With numbers still growing the decision was made to establish two congregations but clearly still as one church. A congregation was planted back in Parkway and a new congregation was established at Peartree at the beginning of 2016. Since then, membership has increased from 140 to the current 204.

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