

Cornerstone Church



Church Profile

www.cornerstone-church.co.uk



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Our vision

Cornerstone Church, as a local expression of God's worldwide Church, exists to glorify the Persons of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit through discipling Christians in the truth of God's purposes in Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Bible. Therefore, through the work of the Holy Spirit we will:

- a) give our lives over to the honour and service of Jesus in holy living
- b) pray for, and encourage, fruitfulness and growth in the gospel in our own lives and in the lives of others (Colossians 3.16, Hebrews 3.12-13 and Hebrews 10.24-25)
- c) speak and live out the this life-changing gospel wherever and however we can (1 Corinthians 10.31-11.1)

Where we are

Brighouse is a small West Yorkshire market town (population 30,000) with a strong sense of history and community pride. It is part of the beautiful District of Calderdale and has parks, open spaces and is near to attractive countryside. Located just off the M62, there is easy access to the city of Leeds and both the East and West coasts. It is also well placed for visits to York, Ilkley Moor, and the Yorkshire Dales and Peak District. Transport links are good, with bus, coach and rail services all within a mile of the town centre. Regular train services run to London and most neighbouring towns and cities.

Brighouse

The town centre has a good range of independent shops, a small market and the larger supermarkets are all accessible. The River Calder and the Calder and Hebble Navigation Canal both flow through Brighouse centre and a small marina has narrow boats regularly moored there. Although Brighouse is generally regarded as an economically strong town (and many of the small businesses seem to have weathered the economic downturn since 2007) there are pockets of deprivation in the town which can be identified.

The area round the church's Café 139 is one of the more densely populated parts of the town and is an excellent location from which to reach into the community.

There is a small Chinese community in the town and a few families from different ethnic groups but probably due to the pattern of surrounding industries there are not the larger communities of African Caribbean people or those from an Asian background of neighbouring towns.



Local schools and higher education

Families who live in Brighouse (and the surrounding areas) send their children to a wide number of schools including maintained, academies and a couple of smaller independent schools which offer both primary and secondary education. The vast majority of these are currently deemed as at least 'good' (by Ofsted), and in some cases there is pressure on places, especially for primary aged children. Like most local authorities, Calderdale Council operates an admissions policy that ranks proximity to the school just behind the priority for children with special educational needs and/or disability, and children with a sibling already in a school. There are number of options for post-16 education, including easy access to both school-based sixth form colleges and a couple of straight sixth form colleges with good reputations. The towns of Halifax and Huddersfield also offer post-16 colleges that provide both academic and vocational courses. Beyond that, the neighbouring town of Huddersfield boasts a highly regarded university.

The religious profile of the town

Historically a 'Methodist' town (John Wesley preached here), there were many large Methodist churches built here. They have now amalgamated and the one large remaining church in the town centre, 'Central Methodist', is the result of that. The other claim to the Christian religious heritage is heralded on a plaque outside a former printing works, 'William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, preached here'.

The Church of England, with its Parish Church and a number of satellites, the Roman Catholic Church, Baptist Church, Community Church, Christian Brethren, Christian Scientists and Jehovah's Witnesses all have a presence in the town.

A brief history of Cornerstone Church

Originally known as Brighthouse Evangelical Church, the church was established in 1977 and met in a former Co-operative Society premises, whose purchase was arranged by the group of three families who felt called to start an independent gospel work in the town. The Church affiliated to the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches and FIEC Ltd acted as Trustee.



A Pastor was called in 1979, on a part time basis, and eventually became the full time Pastor. Steven Bowers was appointed and has continued to serve the church as Pastor until recently when he left with the blessing of the Fellowship to take up a senior post with the European Missionary Fellowship. The last decade has seen many changes and clear direction from God in a number of ways. The church now meets in Brighthouse Civic Hall, in the town centre, for Sunday morning services and special events. The church's name was changed to 'Cornerstone Church, Brighthouse', and after the move to the Civic Hall a

decision was taken to use the ground floor of the owned building to set up a church café. Café 139 is a 30 seat café open Tuesday to Friday 10am-3pm and Saturday 10:30am-2:30pm. This is managed by a paid manager and a team of enthusiastic and committed volunteers!

Some Statistics

Cornerstone Church Brighthouse has a growing membership, currently standing at 47 and regular Sunday morning attendance of 60-90 people. Mid-week there are six small groups who meet twice monthly in homes. Approximately 70% of the church attenders are involved in these groups, which offer Bible Study, prayer and pastoral support from small group leaders.

How we work as a church family

A highly committed fellowship is actively involved in the well-established church 'teams' structure. Many practical tasks including catering, setting-up, communications, Communion and welcome, ensure essential functions are completed every week. The music team leads the church in sung praise and worship, using a range of instruments and encouraging the use of both modern and older hymns to help the church engage with the teaching, and to encourage responses to its application. The Publicity Team produces an extensive range of quality publicity used to advertise church events and keep the fellowship up-to-date, and maintains and updates the website. A weekly 'Tots and Toys' runs (in the same space) on a Wednesday morning providing a well-attended and much appreciated get-together for young children and their parents/carers. The Café Team – besides producing freshly filled paninis and home-made cakes, and working through a lot of washing up and cleaning(!) – use the opportunities of contacts in the community to offer good Christian literature and serious discussion on spiritual matters. Many mums from Tots and Toys enjoy using the Café facilities.

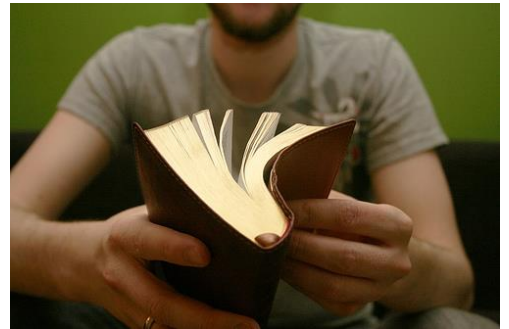
The Café is also used by the CAP (Christians Against Poverty) Team who run money courses aimed at the general public and also support CAP debt clients from Brighthouse who attend the nearest Debt Centre. Cornerstone Memory Café meets in the Civic Hall twice monthly to offer friendship, support and compassion over tea and cake, to people suffering with memory problems and their hard-working carers. The vital Building and Finance Teams do what they 'say on the tin'!

The children and youth work is centred around 3 main groups – Junior Church, XP for 5-9s and The Bridge which mixes basic Bible study and social activity; it is really encouraging to see that some of the young people have professed faith and now attend church.

All the team leaders are church members but the membership can include any born-again Christians who attend the church and agree to the church's Statement of Faith.

The ministry of the church

The main Sunday morning teaching programme focuses on God's Word applied for us today, through preaching, reading, singing and audio-visual aids. The aim is to be contemporary and relevant, whilst maintaining the timeless truths of the faith. Our preaching aims are clear: our goal in Bible ministry is to teach God's word with integrity, clarity and in dependence upon the Holy Spirit seek to apply it to our lives. Our view of Scripture is clear in the Statement of Faith and we aim to reflect that in the church's regular ministry, worship, teaching and evangelism. We are committed to a 'one-anothering' approach and a current area for development is teaching and training. A monthly men's breakfast is one way we use to encourage bible study, prayer and topical conversation.



Outreach is based primarily around building relationships with people in our community and the Café is a good source of opportunity to both make links and use for outreach. One useful opportunity is the community choir that runs in the building every week during term time. Already this has given opportunity to meet new people to share the good news with. All our outreach activity is geared to sharing the Gospel with people and this is currently being done using the Uncover Luke/John programme. A range of training and introductory courses are also run at intervals. These include 'newcomers' events to explain what the church believes and teaches, a baptismal course, and for people who express an interest in joining the church membership, a membership introduction course.

A little about the current leadership

The church uses a model of elders and deacons, and currently has two serving elders and two deacons. We are currently seeking the support of either a voluntary or paid administrator from within the church. The Growth Group leaders and team leaders provide vital additional pastoral support and work in coordinating the work of the church.