Church Crookham Baptist Church



July 2026

www.churchcrookhambaptistchurch.org.uk

1. Introduction

We are a loving Church fellowship in North Hampshire, rooted in biblical truth and led by the Spirit.

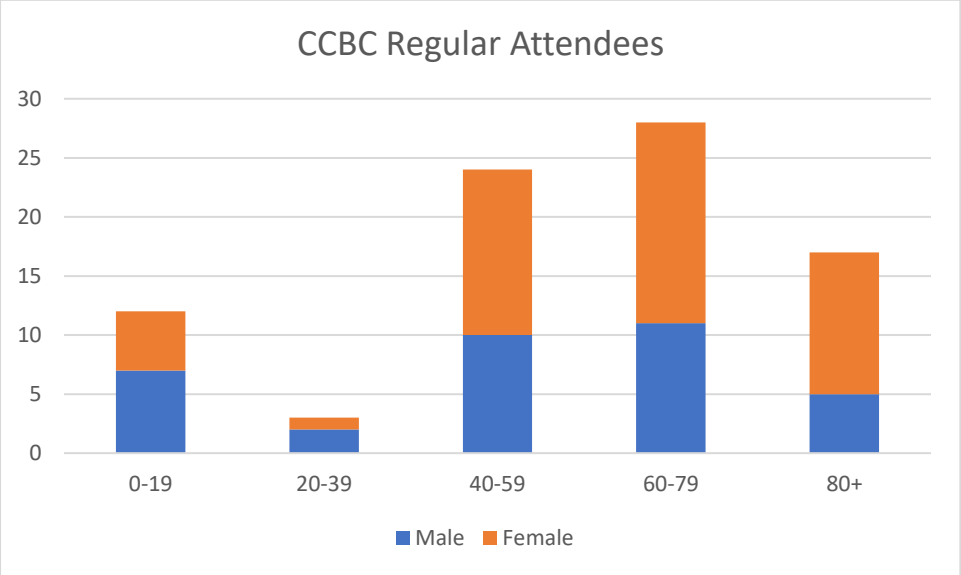
We are seeking to appoint a full time Pastor, following the retirement of the previous pastor, to continue our vision of “To know Jesus Christ and to make Him known to others”.

2. Our Church as it is now

The People

The Church has 58 members with an additional 30 regularly attending. This correlates quite closely to an average sized Baptist Church according to the Baptist Union statistical return.

Demographically, our congregation contains a mixture of age ranges from very active children, a close-knit set of teenagers through to the faithful and servant hearted older generation.



We currently have 7 trustees including 2 Elders.

In the last three years we have been thrilled to have conducted the baptism of six people.

The Services

We have one morning service on a Sunday which is also live streamed to those who are part of our community but cannot attend. Our worship includes a mixture of traditional and contemporary songs led by our worship band.

A popular fixture of the Sunday service is a family talk after which the children and young people leave for their groups. We run two Sunday school groups for children and those in secondary school.

Services usually include a time of open prayer and we hold a monthly morning prayer meeting.

We celebrate Communion once a month, with family services roughly once a school term.

The Activities

Currently, we have four weekly housegroups and a fortnightly afternoon “Tuesday Fellowship” attended by mainly retired people, who gather for fellowship, worship, and discussion.

We have a very active prayer team, with regular prayer meetings, prayer ministry and a dedicated prayer room.

We employ a leader to run Little Lambs Toddler group. It runs three times a week and attracts 50 families including 70 children each week. Story time and singing time are very popular with the children, and the adults (nowadays a mixture of parents, grandparents, and childminders) enjoy a good chat over a cup of tea or coffee!

A youth group (Re:Fuel) is held fortnightly with a mixture of games, food, craft and a Bible talk. We are blessed with a group of teenagers who are actively involved in church life.

The Buildings

Our Sanctuary was built in 1957 and a hall was added in 2007. The facilities suit our needs, with the sanctuary seating 90 people. During the week, we hire the hall out to community groups including U3A, Guides and language classes.

We do not have a baptistry, instead we hold baptism services at another local church.





Wider Connections

Baptist: The Church is in membership of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and the South East Baptist Association. It supports both Home Mission and BMS World Mission financially and in prayer.

Mission Support: Our financial support to other Christian organisations is strong. We support 13 organisations and have particularly close relationships with Compassion, SASRA (The Soldiers' & Airmen's Scripture Readers Association) and Through the Roof.

In particularly, the Church actively supports Fleet and Crookham Churches Together in Schools (FAACTS) with Church members serving as Trustees, employees and volunteers.

Ecumenical (local): The Church is part of Christians Together in Fleet and Crookham incorporating 10 local churches. The group host an annual unity service and respond to crises with emergency prayer meetings. CCBC also organise the annual Easter "SonRise" service – an outdoor service of praise and prayer on the summit of a local hill at the start of the day on Easter Sunday morning.

Other: The church is in membership of the Evangelical Alliance.

3. The Area



Curiously, Church Crookham Baptist Church buildings actually resides (just!) in Fleet. Both Fleet and Church Crookham form part of the district of Hart.

The Fleet and Church Crookham area has a population of approximately 45,000 and is most notable for Fleet Pond and the M3 service station which bears its name!

During the 2010's, Halifax undertook quality of life study and Hart was consistently ranked as one of the top places to live in the UK.

Whilst Fleet and Church Crookham is well connected via road and rail, it is surrounded by beautiful rural countryside including the Basingstoke Canal. The town has a high street and small shopping centre with very well-respected local schools.



Some statistical data regarding Hart:

- The English Indices of Deprivation 2019, indicated that Hart is the least deprived English district local authority. However, this masks economic need in the community. Near the Church is an area of social housing and the Church has strong links to that community.
- The 2021 census showed that the majority of residents (**86.9%**) of Hart are White British (Ethnic group, England and Wales: Census 2021), whilst **49.8%** of respondents identified themselves as Christian (Religion, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics).

Popular annual community events include Fleet Carnival and Fleet Christmas Festival, and the church actively supports both these events as a platform for outreach.

Fleet and Church Crookham is often considered as a place to move to, from London, for "cheaper" housing and a better place to raise families. It also attracts those wishing to live in a retirement property. The Church has newer attendees in the latter category but not the first. However, the toddler group has seen several families join who previously lived in London.

4. The Church we would like to see

Our overall vision is "To know Jesus Christ and to make Him known to others". Our desire, therefore, is to be a church which, under the direction of the Holy Spirit:

- hears and seeks to obey God's Word through faithful preaching, teaching, and study of the Bible;
- passionately makes "every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace";
- loves, cares for and supports each other, so that our pastoral care is done primarily through the body of the church;
- recognises and celebrates people's frontlines;
- helps people thrive and share their faith in their frontline;
- seeks to reach out to our neighbourhood, sharing the love of God in the gospel in relevant and meaningful ways; and
- seeks to follow the Lord wherever He leads, adapting and changing as appropriate and agreed together.

Themes running through all we seek to do include obedience to Jesus' commands to:

- be worshippers who worship God in Spirit and in truth;
- lift Him up so that all may be drawn to Him; and
- love God with our all and to love our neighbour as ourselves.

Our heart is to welcome all to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ, with many being born again, baptised and added to the church – with each member seeking to live Godly lives, walking in the footsteps of Jesus Christ.

5. The Minister we believe that we need

Our primary requirement is for a pastor and teacher who seeks to fulfil the Biblical standards set out in passages such as 1 Timothy 3v1-7, Titus 1v6-9 and 1 Peter 5v2,3. Clearly, we hope that our Minister will embrace fully all of the aspects above within “The Church we would like to see”.

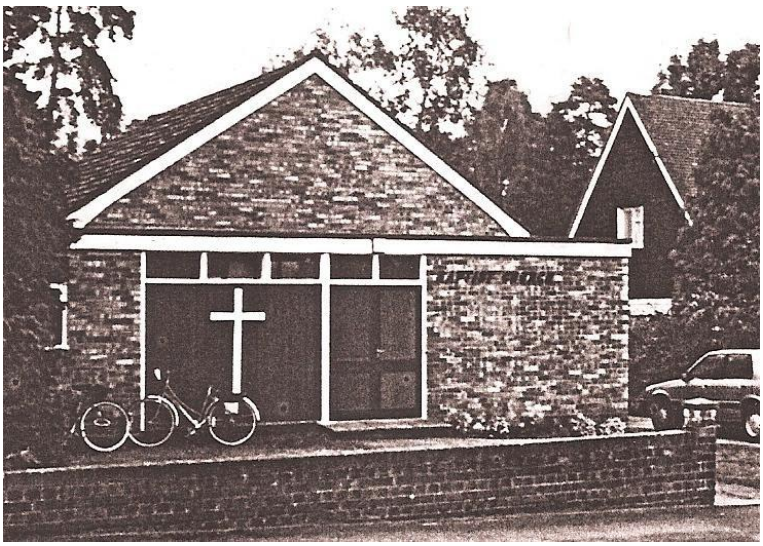
We welcome the ministry of the gifts of the Holy Spirit across the church whilst emphasising that everything must be done "in a fitting and orderly way" (1 Corinthians 14v40). We are in essence a reformed, complementarian church, whilst recognising that a range of views is held by church members. We hold a traditional view of Christian marriage and would seek a Minister that would, with pastoral sensitivity, uphold this position. We seek a Minister who supports and continues in this overall direction of the church, and endeavours to maintain the unity of the Spirit.

6. A brief history of the church

In 1937 Fleet Baptist Church decided to open a mission to the large Army camp based in Crookham. Thus, a Baptist work in Crookham was begun with the opening of the Crookham Crossroads Gospel Mission on January 31st.

Unexpectedly around 1954 an opportunity arose to re-locate the work to Basingbourne Road in Church Crookham. The land given was at that time in a heavily wooded area and questions were asked at a Fleet Baptist Church meeting “Why build in no man’s land?” “ Why not build where the people are?” However, this plot was on the edge of what was soon to become a major housing development.

The new church building was opened in October 1957 but remaining a daughter church of Fleet Baptist Church and under their Pastor the Rev.R.H Spooner.



During the late 1950's and 1960's, the new houses in the area were mainly occupied by young families moving into the area and the work of the Sunday School expanded rapidly under the leadership of its Superintendent Mr Fred O'Donnell ("Uncle Fred"), with as many as 130 children meeting at different times during Sundays. Boy and Girl Covenanters groups were held on Sunday mornings and the younger children in the afternoons. There were so many younger children they had to be divided into two groups, as the church was not big enough to accommodate them all.



The 1960's had been a time of considerable social change in this country but it was to be the 1970's that proved to be the decade of change for Crookham Baptist Church.

It was also during the early-seventies that the charismatic movement was beginning to grow and in 1973 several members were drawn away from the fellowship to join the emerging house church movement in Fleet and Crookham.

The size of the Sunday school had remained fairly static during the 1960's but as the families started to grow up and the nature of Sundays in Britain changed from being a day of 'rest' to one of 'recreation', numbers started to decline.

During late 1978 and early 1979, with declining numbers, serious consideration was given to closing the Church and moving all its meetings to the Fleet Baptist Church who were also seeing a decline in numbers. However, in the summer of 1979 two families moved into the area and joined the church and boosted the congregation by 10! There were to be no further discussions about closing the church. Praise the Lord for his overruling.

During the period 1980s God encouraged and blessed the fellowship. There was a slow but steady development of the work with small but regular numbers attending both Sunday and mid-week meetings.

In June 1992 after much prayer and with the full backing of the Fleet Baptist Church, the church became a Baptist Church in its own right and was renamed Church Crookham Baptist Church.

In January 1993 our first full time Pastor Rev Philip Wright was appointed and he and his family moved into the Manse we had purchased just a few weeks before.

After Phil left and until April 1998 the work was led by three Elders and God graciously continued to bless the fellowship in that time. The 10-year loan we had taken out to purchase the Manse was paid off in 4 years leaving us free to concentrate our giving on mission and creating a building fund.

In April 1998 the church appointed its second full time pastor the Rev Gordon McIndoe who came to us from Scotland with his wife Jenny, their two grown up daughters staying in Scotland.

During the period 1996 to 2000 the membership remained fairly constant with around 130 adults and children attending Sunday morning worship and youth groups. Our buildings were therefore still giving us accommodation problems and so a set of plans were drawn up and submitted to the local council. These were rejected because of concerns over car parking and the impact on the local neighbourhood. The Church spent much time seeking the Lord's guidance on the way forward, was the Lord saying" No" or "Not Yet"? Many different ideas were considered e.g. should we be looking for another site, should we consider hiring a hall for Sunday worship, etc. Eventually after holding a 3 day prayer and fast it was decided in 1998 to submit one more set of plans for approval. It was not until Feb 2000 that these plans were finally approved.

Unfortunately, at around this time the membership had started to decline and there was a growing gap within the Leadership and some members of the church on their vision for the future development of the fellowship. This culminated in 2001 with around 20 members and their families moving away to form their own independent fellowship.

With the congregation at CCBC now numbering around 50 the need for larger premises had largely disappeared, so it was decided not to proceed with the development of the premises at that time but to concentrate on rebuilding the fellowship both numerically and spiritually.

After a period of consolidation new people started to be added to our numbers and in 2004 it was decided that the time was now right to think again about extending our premises. The hall in particular was beginning to reach the end of its useful life and a building committee was set up to review the plans we already had and make recommendations concerning any changes needed. Eventually a design brief was agreed and another firm of Architects appointed.

After a delay, due to the builders going into receivership, May 2007 saw the opening of the new premises, almost 50 years exactly after the laying of the foundation stone of the original building. It was not until June 2007 that the mortgage was finally granted albeit for £30,000 less than we hoped for. However, God moves in mysterious ways and by amazing 'coincidence' or 'God-incidence' we received a grant for exactly that amount from a Trust fund called the 'Ellis Trust,' which was principally set up to fund new projects in Methodist churches in this area.

After a period a period of interregnum, Robin Agnes, was appointed as Pastor. He was a gifted Evangelist who brought people into the church who would probably otherwise would not have thought of church as their natural environment.

In 2011, Paul Brice, an Elder and a member was called to lay down his local government job in London and become our full-time pastor.

Paul and the Church was given particular word of sending people "over the wall", by supporting placement students and those growing their ministries. During Paul's tenure, strong links with Moorlands College were formed and the Church sponsored four theological student placements. The unity of the Church was strengthened and membership grew steadily.

In 2012, CCBC actively considered planting a Church on Crookham Park, a new large housing development. There is now a thriving congregation who are part of The Vine Church Odiham.

Following a cash legacy, the premises were extended in 2020 with an additional room acting as an office and a meeting room.

In 2019, Paul Brice graciously said he no longer required a stipend.

This gave the opportunity for us to employ an Assistant pastor, Luke Barrs, who had previously been a Moorlands placement student here. Luke's teaching and communications gifts were particularly useful during the pandemic when his online videos were very popular, especially those involving his children.

The Church navigated the global pracademic well, starting online services on the first Sunday of lockdown. The services continue to be streamed online to those in the fellowship.

Luke left in 2022 to take up the leadership of Canterbury Baptist Church. This meant the Church had a large surplus in annual income which has enabled us to greatly support Christian charities in the UK and around the world.

A longer version of the history can be seen on the website.

7. Practical Matters

Stipend

We will supply a stipend which aligns with the needs of the Pastor. We recognise that the Church lies in an area with living costs above the UK national average, but this must balance with the need to ensure we can substain our financial commitment to a Pastor.

The stipend and accommodation needs will be discussed with the candidate, but as a guide, we anticipate offering:

- A stipend based on the candidate's needs,
- 5% Pension contribution.
- Either the use of our manse (see below) or other suitable rented accommodation.
- Council tax, broadband and water costs.

Accommodation

The Church has a four-bedroom manse in a quiet residential area (GU52 6JL), 0.5 miles from the Church building and near to local schools.

The property is currently rented out. If a new Pastor does not require such a large property, then alternative property can be rented.



Professional Development

We will support a Pastor in their professional development, and we have a development budget to support this.

8. Contacts

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