

Barrowby Baptist Fellowship **Church Profile**

Who are we?

We are a church family who seek to follow Jesus as Lord in our personal lives and to serve Him in the power of the Holy Spirit in the community within which God has placed us.

How did we get here?

In the early 1990s God gave to the membership of Grantham Baptist Church a vision of tongues of fire above the villages surrounding the town. Concluding that God wished them to move in a new way in these places they established a daughter church in Barrowby in 1992 where a number of members lived and others were settling. The church was led by John Dyson, one of the elders at the mother church, together with his wife Hilary. John remained our pastor until December 2018 when he died and went to be with the Lord. Prior to this John and the rest of the leadership team had been fully involved in a process to identify and appoint his successor and in September 2019 Adam Grant was appointed as Pastor. We do not have our own building but meet in Barrowby Memorial Hall. Over time we have been blessed with gifts which have enabled us to purchase a house for use as a manse. We have recently paid off a loan for this from our regular offerings.

Assisted by his wife Zara, Adam has led the church through some of its most challenging times. For much of his tenure the Memorial Hall was closed due to covid restrictions, meaning that services and house groups had to be conducted online. Even when the premises re-opened there were initial restrictions on numbers as well as distancing and safeguarding measures. Even so, overall church membership has largely been maintained. New members have been attracted to the fellowship whilst others have taken personal steps of faith. In keeping with our Vision, our style of worship has evolved to remain relevant, contemporary and inclusive and our outreach activities, to both young and old, continue to receive God's blessing.

Adam and Zara have now received God's calling to pursue their ministry elsewhere, meaning that we have a vacancy for a new Pastor to build on all that they and their predecessors John and Hilary have achieved.

We have no fixed size to our leadership team but currently it consists of the pastor, two elders, three deacons, one of whom is the church secretary, and a treasurer. We recognise that others in the fellowship lead particular aspects of the church or particular activities. We maintain links with Grantham Baptist Church but we have been fully autonomous since 2001.

What do we do?

Over the years we have seen God's blessing in conversions, baptisms and growth in the Christian life. We minister to the community by means of children's and young people's groups, in which we are supported by the parish church, on a Friday evening; and to a group of largely retired people through a coffee morning on Mondays and soup lunches about twice a month. Both of these ministries have clear gospel content.

We meet for worship on Sunday mornings in the village's Memorial Hall. Our average congregation is around 30 of varied ages. A Sunday school is available for the children. Style

of worship varies depending on the person leading and the object of the service. We can be noisy and quiet, exuberant and joyful, corporate and individual, free to contribute and free to be led. We hope we always look to the Holy Spirit to guide us in our worship.

Individual growth is encouraged through small groups which vary in style and objectives, although all lead to deeper commitment. House groups and a ladies' prayer group meet regularly and a weekly prayer meeting, started on Zoom during lockdown, has continued online. Alpha courses have been run in several formats with a number of target groups.

Pastoral care is the responsibility of the Pastor who is assisted by a small team including one of the deacons. Less formal pastoral support is offered through the small groups.

The fellowship has links with the wider Christian community in and around Grantham, being part of the Catalyst Group. This was set up by John Dyson and another minister to promote unity and provide prayer support for evangelical leaders. We are a member of Churches Together in Grantham and support "The Passage" working with homeless people and the Grantham Food Bank. Members attend the Easter March of Witness. There are many friendships between our members and members of other churches in and around the town and we have a friendly relationship with All Saints Parish Church in Barrowby.

We have supportive members in Canada and Eastern Europe and there are strong links with a group of churches in Moldova whom we support in prayer, in finance and in manpower. We also support a missionary couple in Turkey. Several members have links with other overseas organisations including Open Doors, MAF and the BMS and there is a Prayer for Israel group which meets monthly.

Where are we going?

We believe God has called us to be a light on a hill, geographically but more importantly spiritually. We believe we will continue to have opportunities to minister to our community and to influence other communities. Barrowby is a large, established but growing village with a new mixed development of private and social housing underway. To minister effectively we must continue to focus on our core values expressed in our statement of faith; seek to present Jesus in a variety of ways to those who do not yet know Him so as to bring them to faith in Him; encourage each member to deepen their knowledge of God, their relationship with Him and their commitment to His work. All this must be underpinned by prayer. Our guiding verses would be Jesus' statements in Matthew 22:37-40 and Matthew 28:18-20.