



Ashford Baptist Church

ASHFORD BAPTIST CHURCH

CHURCH PROFILE 2026

www.ashfordbaptist.org.uk
Charity No. 1130593





INTRODUCTION



Ashford Baptist Church is a vibrant, multi-cultural, and family-focused community, committed to providing a welcoming space for people of all ages and backgrounds. Located in a town centre experiencing significant inward movement, the church attracts a diverse community, including many young people and those relocating to work locally.



It's important to us that we uphold the integrity of Scripture and, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, seek to interpret it for day-to-day life. We believe this enables us to foster a Bible-based, worshipful, and prayerful atmosphere in which everyone can thrive.



We have a desire to engage further with local and overseas mission and a vision to grow in faith and action. We want to strengthen inter-cultural collaboration within our church family, as well as strengthen connections with the local community beyond our doors.

We recognise that new seasons bring opportunity to change and grow.

As a church we have invested in ministry to young people and children by employing a part-time Youth Worker (22.5 hours a week), and a children's worker who also works as the Church Administrator (22.5 hours a week).

We seek a Minister and leader who loves Jesus and has a heart for all ages. Someone able to bring their experience of leading and developing an effective church community, who can guide us in this exciting season of growth and change as we seek to support one another and serve our neighbourhood.





During our history, several daughter churches were planted in the area. Two went on to thrive and become independent; three have closed; and one remains as part of the ABC membership. This is situated in Boughton Aluph, north of the town. There is currently a small, elderly congregation who meet monthly for a Sunday Communion service, a thriving and happy lunch club for seniors, and a smaller monthly coffee morning and light lunch gathering.



We are also blessed to have a large Nepalese community as part of our church family, joining and taking part in Sunday morning services, and gathering for Nepali services on a Sunday afternoon.



THE CHURCH AS IT IS NOW

As a church we have identified growth points. These include: The Boys' Brigade and Girls' Association, Sunday youth and children's groups, Youth discipling courses, 18+ group and Wednesday women's Bible study.



Nonetheless, whilst we see growth potential, the overall size of our Sunday congregation remains steady, though the individuals attending may vary due to many working shifts.

We have a large core group and others who attend intermittently due to work and family commitments. At present the membership is 105 and the congregation around 150.



We believe the church is more than just the Sunday gathering; it is the collective life of our faith community, including all our events and activities.



Sunday gathering for worship includes modern and traditional songs of worship, this sung worship is important to us, as are opportunities for people to respond and be supported through prayer.



People are encouraged to participate in services, ranging from being involved in leading worship, preaching, music, prayer, and Bible readings. There are also other ways to serve, such as welcoming and hospitality, stewarding, the tech team, and children and youth ministries. We hope that everyone can find something to engage with, both in terms of participation and personal worship.

We seek to create a welcoming atmosphere, where we hope people of all ages and backgrounds can worship together as an intergenerational and intercultural community of faith.

Once a month we have a 'Café Service' which we see as an opportunity for people of all ages to explore faith in a less traditional setting. We welcome a variety of different styles in preaching and leading, and encourage people with gifting in those areas to continue to grow and use their gifting, and take up training opportunities.



The church is well-placed to engage with the surrounding community being very centrally located. We actively seek to connect with various groups, particularly through initiatives aimed at families, children, and the elderly.

Whether through Family Food and Fun, parenting courses, or youth outreach programmes, we strive to meet both spiritual and practical needs, serving as a bridge for those seeking deeper community connections.



We are part of Churches Together in Ashford and have collaborated in events and outreach, demonstrating our commitment to working collectively in sharing the gospel. However, we recognise too that while we support mission, engaging in it as a whole community is not our greatest strength at present and we are looking to develop in this area.



THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY

Ashford is a thriving town in the heart of Kent, often described as a bustling mix of the traditional and the modern.

It's a town that blends its historical roots with a forward-looking identity shaped by its position as a hub for transport, commerce, and development.

While not strictly rural, Ashford enjoys proximity to the picturesque Kent countryside, offering residents the best of both worlds—modern conveniences with easy access to natural beauty.



Ashford's population is diverse, reflecting a mix of ages, ethnicities, and socio-economic backgrounds (approximately 83,000 live in the town and 130,000 in the wider Ashford District).

The town has seen significant growth in recent decades, which was partly due to its excellent transport links to London and Europe via the High-Speed Rail and the Eurostar at Ashford International Station (although sadly the European services from Ashford were withdrawn which had a significant impact on the economy of the town).



Nonetheless the area has attracted commuters, young families, and professionals alongside long-standing residents.

Historically, Ashford was a market town and later a railway town, and both remain an integral part of its identity. Today, it is known for its retail and service sectors, with the Ashford Designer Outlet drawing visitors from far and wide.

Education also plays a significant role, with schools and colleges attracting families to the area.

The William Harvey and The One Hospital's provide critical healthcare and employment to many local people.





There is a noticeable pride in Ashford's ability to grow and adapt. Initiatives such as local farmers' markets, community events, and cultural festivals reflect the town's commitment to fostering a sense of belonging.



Green spaces like Victoria Park and Conningbrook Lakes provide areas for families and groups to gather and enjoy outdoor activities and sport throughout the year.

However, there are areas where community cohesion can feel fragmented, particularly in newer developments or among more transient populations. That said, there is a strong network of local charities, support groups, and faith organizations working to meet needs and build connections.

Ashford faces some challenges, including pockets of economic disparity, a growing demand for housing, and pressures on local infrastructure. Social isolation, particularly among older residents and those in newer housing estates, is an area where community action could make a difference. Traffic congestion, access to key services, and concerns about the environmental impact of continued expansion are also notable tensions.



THE CHURCH WE WANT TO SEE



As a church we want to continue being a place where people feel they belong and are able to explore faith for themselves: where they know they are welcome and able to ask big questions about life and faith in a safe place. We want ABC to be seen as a good place to belong and a place to find meaning.



We also want to grow deeper in faith, bearing an authentic and sincere witness in all we do. We recognise we need to discover more of God's purposes for us, both as a church community and as individuals.



We have a few small groups but would like to develop more to help connect people at all stages of life, to provide support, and encourage people to walk in the ways of Jesus. We would love to see these small groups also engage in mission opportunities.



As a church we feel particularly blessed with the large number of young people who attend various activities and services, and we want to help them grow and use their skills and gifts within and outside the church community. We want to invest in people of all ages and cultures, and continue to be known as a mission supporting and sending church.

We also seek to become more creative and innovating, welcoming and hospitable, so that new people are integrated and involved, and those who have been around longer still feel valued and able to use their gifts to enable ABC to become all that God wants of us.



THE MINISTER WE ARE SEEKING

We recognise that ministers, like all of us, have strengths and weaknesses, so we seek someone we can love, support and serve with, as a church family. We desire a leader who can be the person God has made them to be, and who will grow to love and support ABC in return.

Alongside this we are looking for a minister who;

- Loves Jesus, and is passionate about growing in their own discipleship
- Loves people, and is passionate about helping them grow in their discipleship
- Is a Spirit-filled, pastor, teacher, and preacher
- Is a team player that loves leading and supporting existing teams as well as shaping new ones
- Will work with us to discover fresh vision and direction for this next season, helping us serve as a church community and engage with those around us locally
- Is able to communicate effectively, whether that's with larger groups or individuals



SUMMARY OF TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

Job Title – Minister of Ashford Baptist Church

Hours – Full time

Stipend – In line with BU recommendations and to be discussed with candidate

Pension – In line with BU recommendations

Housing – A four bedroom Manse with a large garden is available, but the church is also willing to consider other options. The church will pay council tax and water rates on the property occupied by the Minister

Expenses – All expenses in line with the duty of a Minister will be agreed at appointment

Training and Conferences – In keeping with BU guidelines, on-going training is encouraged and can be discussed with the leadership team and agreed by the Church Meeting as appropriate

Workspace – There is office space available within the church building, with opportunity for flexible working arrangements





OCCUPATIONAL REQUIREMENT AND APPLICATION PROCESS

This role has an occupational requirement for the post holder to be a committed Christian, able to proactively agree with and commit to the mission and vision of our church, and with the Evangelical Alliance statement of faith. The post holder will also need to maintain affiliation with the Baptist Union.

The post is subject to an enhanced DBS check with the barred list check. We operate a safe recruitment policy.

We invite interested candidates to share with us their minister profile, or CV, and to have an initial informal meeting which can include a look-see visit to the church premises. Please contact: rachel.phipps.abc@gmail.com

Candidate's progressing through the process will meet with the leadership team and preach at a Sunday service. If successful at this stage, will be invited to a structured interview process, typically completed over a weekend. This will include:

- Meeting with church leadership and group leaders
- Preaching at a Sunday morning service
- A range of social activities to enable meeting the church community

Following the weekend the church will meet to discern whether to appoint the candidate.