

Welcome



Pier Avenue
Baptist Church

The Guide for Newcomers



Registered charity number 1135764. Pier Avenue, Clacton-on-Sea, CO15 1NJ.
www.pieravenuebaptistchurch.org.uk info@pieravenue.org.uk

August 2024

Church Details

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Registered Charity Number: 1135764



Dear Friend,

Welcome to Pier Avenue Baptist Church.

If you are reading this then you are either thinking about making us your church, or have decided to make us your church. You've made a great choice! Please read on...

Joining a new church is daunting. There are things that are done which may seem strange, some familiar. People may talk about groups, various rooms in the church etc. without explaining what or where they are. It's easy to get a little lost to start with.

This guide will help you understand the church structure, groups and traditions, give you a map of the church rooms, and help you with many other big and little things that help make this church run. At the end of reading this guide, joining our church should feel a little less daunting!

We hope this guide helps you quickly settle in to our church family.

Every Blessing,

Friends from Pier Avenue Baptist Church

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Church Structure

The Baptist Church: In the Baptist family everybody is equal, for everybody has a part to play in the service of God. There is no hierarchy of bishops or priests exercising authority over their members. Equality of status, however, does not mean that all have the same role.

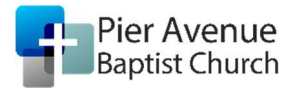
National: Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB). Our Union of over 2000 churches is supported by staff in thirteen regional associations and three specialist teams based in Didcot, Oxfordshire. Our six Baptist Colleges prepare men and women for ministry and offer ongoing development and training. Pier Avenue Baptist Church resides in the Eastern region. *Find out more at:* www.baptist.org.uk



Regional: Eastern Baptist Association (EBA). There are over 170 churches in the east of England who are part of the association, we are one of those member churches. The eastern region covers Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Essex. *Find out more at:* www.easternbaptist.org.uk



Local: Pier Avenue Baptist Church (PABC). PABC was founded on the 2nd July 1902. Each local Baptist church is autonomous, therefore appoints its own Minister (via a process called the 'Settlement Process'). The appointment of a Minister is formally agreed by the church membership at a church meeting.



The Minister: Has particular responsibility for preaching, teaching and pastoral care. Working alongside the Minister are Deacons who, together with the Minister, form the leadership team of the local Baptist Church. Our particular Minister lives in the Church Manse, which is owned by PABC. Ministers usually take a sabbatical, lasting 3 months, occurring every 7th year in the ministry.

Since 1902, 15 Ministers have been called to serve at our church. This position is currently held by Rev. Michelle Eversden-Thomas who was inducted in August 2024 (see page 6).

The Diaconate: This is the name given for a group of Deacons. Deacons are responsible for various practical ministries within the church, some of these include: finance, upkeep of the fabric of the church buildings, service in various forms and serving as Trustees.

There are two specified roles / church officers within the Diaconate: *Church Secretary*, who is Karen Rai, and the *Church Treasurer*, who is Heather Baines. The remaining group of Deacons are: David Baines, Tony Meloy, Richard Geddes, Rev. Pauline Bailey, Ian Day, Elaine Hoadley & Ian Smith (see page 7).

Charity Trustees: As PABC is a charity, we have a group of Trustees who are tasked to meet the requirements of the Charity Commission as set out in their guidelines. The Trustees of PABC comprises the Minister (chairperson) and the Diaconate.

Meet the Minister!

In July 2024, PABC appointed **Rev. Michelle Eversden-Thomas** to be our new full-time Minister, she writes about herself:

Hello! I am Michelle, a (fairly) Newly Accredited Baptist Minister (NAM). I graduated from Spurgeon's College in 2022 with a Masters in Christian Thought and Practice. My dissertation was 'Unintended Pregnancies: The Christian Community as a Place of Loving Pastoral Care' and God has put this issue on my heart to pursue practically in due course.

I have been married to Del since 2017. He is the co-founder of and works full-time for a homeless charity in Southend. I have three children, aged twenty-one, eighteen and thirteen and a fourteen-year-old step daughter. I live with Del, my youngest child Jason and a seventeen-year-old cat called Eek. I am forty-five years old. I enjoy reading historical and crime novels and swimming.

Before I trained for ministry, I worked as an English tutor. But, after coming to faith and being baptised in 2014, I found that I wanted to be teaching about Jesus rather than apostrophes! I am passionate about engaging in a lifelong wrestle with understanding the Bible texts and making them accessible to the man, woman or child on the street. I am particularly interested in contemporary ethical debates.

I believe that it is the calling of every healthy church to be the 'hands and feet' of Jesus in its local community, caring for people's needs, sharing the Gospel and growing together in discipleship. Most people outside of church don't really understand what it's all about; but are probably more likely to have a conversation with a follower of Jesus outside the school gates or in a shop etc, rather than walking into a church on a Sunday morning. I think we need to be ready to have those conversations wherever we are throughout the week.

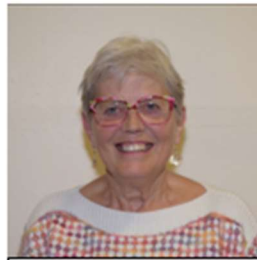


Meet the Deacons!

Currently, the Diaconate comprises of nine Deacons, here they are along with their principal responsibility:



Karen Rai
Church Secretary



Heather Baines
Church Treasurer



David Baines
Advisor



Tony Meloy
Premises Lead



Richard Geddes
Health & Safety



Rev. Pauline Bailey
Ministry & Pastoral



Ian Day
Premises Hire



Elaine Hoadley
Hospitality & Catering



Ian Smith
Technical

Church Beliefs & Articles of Faith

PABC seeks to be an active Christian community / fellowship bringing Christian witness and care to the town of Clacton-on-Sea. The Church also acknowledges its Christian responsibilities beyond the local community and seeks to engage in both national and international situations.

The **Purpose** of the Church is the advancement of the Christian faith according to the principles of the Baptist denomination.

Beliefs

As a member of the Baptist Union, the Church subscribes to the Union's Declaration of Principle:

"The basis of this Union is:

1. That our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, is the sole and absolute authority in all matters pertaining to faith and practice, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and that each Church has liberty, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to interpret and administer His laws.
2. That Christian baptism is the immersion in water into the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, of those who have professed repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ who 'died for our sins according to the Scriptures, was buried and rose again on the third day.'
3. That it is the duty of every disciple to bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to take part in the evangelisation of the world."

Articles of Faith

This Church is witness to:

1. The Divine Authority, Inspiration and Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures and the need for the Holy Spirit's leading in order to attain a true and spiritual understanding of them.
2. The Unity of the Godhead and Divine co-equality of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
3. The reality of sin, the need of repentance towards God and the new birth by Holy Spirit and the justification of the sinner solely by faith through the atoning merits of our Lord Jesus Christ.
4. The essential deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, His Incarnation through a Virgin Birth, His real and perfect manhood, His substitutionary death for sinners, His Resurrection, His Ascension, His present intercession for His people at the right hand of God the Father, His future personal return.
5. The Resurrection of the body, the judgement of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ.
6. The Ordinances of Believers' Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Church Strategies & Activities

Strategies:

- a. **Worship** - to seek to provide appropriate worship to God and review our act of worship on a regular basis.
- b. **Ecumenical** - to actively encourage, promote and participate in ecumenical activities.
- c. **Premises** - to maintain the premises to good standard, to promote and provide Church-led and community activities.
- d. **Community needs** - to review the work of the Church and discern the needs of the community and then develop strategies and actions to support as appropriate.
- e. **Teaching** - to develop a programme to promote Christian knowledge and understanding and to enhance the social awareness of the Church. Such a programme to include educating the Church members and congregation about the Baptist denomination regionally and nationally and its links to international Christian activity through the Baptist Missionary Society – World Mission and other Christian organisations.
- f. **Fellowship** - is encouraging, caring, supporting and praying for one another, e.g. through house groups, prayer e-mail.

Activities:

In fulfilling the Purpose, the Church will engage in a range of activities on its own or with others that will vary from time to time with activities being initiated, expanded, or closed, as appropriate.

The activities may include but are not restricted to:

- Regular public worship, prayer, Bible study, preaching and teaching,
- Baptism, as defined in the Union's Declaration of Principle,
- The Communion of the Lord's Supper which shall normally be observed at least once a month,
- Evangelism and mission, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally,
- The teaching, encouragement, welcome and inclusion of young people,
- Nurture and growth of Christian disciples,
- Education and training for Christian and community service,
- Giving and encouraging pastoral care,
- Supporting and encouraging charitable social action in the United Kingdom and abroad,
- Encouraging relationships with and supporting Baptists and other Christians.

Discipleship - this isn't just about Sunday services; house groups and other small groups meet to pray, encourage and nurture each other in our Christian walk.

Prayer - this is the most important part of Church life and our personal walk of faith. We mainly hear about specific prayer needs of the Church via the Prayer e-mail (see page 11), during the Sunday morning service and in our House groups. Generally, all our church services and church groups include a time of prayer. If you would like prayer one-to-one, please make your way to the Quiet Room after the Sunday morning service (see page 13), or ask someone you know, or a church leader who would be happy to pray with you. The Minister can advise you regarding counselling if required.

Pastoral Care & Visiting - this is carried out principally by the Minister, whilst ably supported by a team who visit those who are house-bound, or who would value a visit. This team is headed up by Rev. Pauline Bailey.

Church Values

In June 2019, the Minister and the Diaconate along with their partners spent a day with the Regional Minister at Pleshey Retreat House. The group consisted of those who have been at PABC for a long time and those who are relatively new, those who have experience of life in other Churches and denominations and those who did not.

They undertook a number of practical exercises and discussions, by the end of the day were able to identify what our values are at PABC. This is not a statement or identification of perfection, this is something we see as important to us and is happening to some measure.

We discussed what we saw as important to us at PABC, we agreed these were:

We want to show **LOVE & RESPECT** for each other and for those in our community.

We want to **WORSHIP** God through prayer and learning together.

We want to be **REAL** with God and each other.

We want to **ENCOURAGE** everyone and enable them to develop their skills and abilities and their spiritual gifts and fruits.

We want to be a **WELCOMING** and friendly church that grows together as a family.

We have a great **MESSAGE** of **HOPE** that we want to **SHARE**.

From this we identified our values as **WELCOME**:

W	Worship God.....	John 4:24
E	Encourage each other.....	1 Thessalonians 5:11
L	Love everyone.....	1 John 4:7, John 15:12 & 1 Peter 4:8
C	Continue to grow.....	2 Peter 3:18
O	Openness with God and each other..	Romans 12:9 & Ephesians 4:25
M	Message of hope to share.....	Romans 1:16 & Philemon v6
E	Enable and equip to serve God.....	Colossians 3:23 & Hebrews 13:20-21

Church Policies & Communication

Data Protection Policy

PABC is committed to protecting personal data and respecting the rights of our data subjects: the people whose personal data we collect and use. We value the personal information entrusted to us and we respect that trust by complying with all relevant laws and adopting good practice. If you would like to view this policy, or have any queries relating to its content, please speak to our Data Protection Officer, Heather Baines.

Health & Safety Policy

This policy is maintained by our Health & Safety Officer, Richard Geddes. A copy of the Fire Procedure is located by each fire exit door, please read and familiarise yourself with it.

Safeguarding Policy

PABC recognises the importance of its ministry to children, young people and adults at risk, as well as its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults entrusted to the work of the Church.

Safeguarding is the protection of adults and children from harm, abuse or neglect. Safeguarding involves a range of activities aimed at promoting the individual's right to be safe. These include making and maintaining safe environments for all, having processes to follow should something go wrong, and support for everyone involved. As part of the Safeguarding Policy, a 'Disclosure and Barring Service' (DBS) check is carried out on anyone who intends to work with young people and vulnerable adults. DBS is a government agency, which provides information about employees' and volunteers' criminal records history, so that employers are able to make safer recruitment decisions. The Safeguarding policy is available from the Church Office. For more information, please speak to Karen Rai as she is our Designated Person for Safeguarding (DPS) and Richard Geddes is Deputy Designated Person for Safeguarding. In addition, our Minister is a Safeguarding officer and Rev. Pauline Bailey is our Safeguarding Trustee.

Communication

These are several ways that we communicate information to the church congregation:

1. **Prayer** e-mails are sent out regularly to those who have subscribed to our e-mail service. This can be set up by contacting the Church Secretary, and for any prayer contributions too.
2. **Activities at PABC** e-mails are sent out regularly sharing the church activities for the week ahead. It also communicates much of the *Notice Sheet* information, as well as highlighting a different Baptist Church in the EBA region each time; to learn about the congregation, what they do and what to pray for. Please send any contributions to Church Secretary.
3. **Announcements / Notices** are verbally communicated during the first part of the Sunday Morning service. If you have a notice, please inform the Church Secretary prior to the service.
4. The Church has a **website**, **Facebook** page and a **WhatsApp** group with news and encouragements. Please ask Elaine Hoadley to be added to the Encouragement Groups (**Facebook** and/or **WhatsApp**).
5. **Financial Newsletters**, are written by the Church Treasurer to inform church members: the current state of the church finances, progress of church projects, proposals for major expenditure items or loans.

Membership & Church Meetings

There is a booklet called '**Church Rules & Constitution**' which provides further detail to this section (and many other church topics), it can be obtained from our Church Secretary. Please refer to it, if you have any queries, speak to the Minister.

Church Membership is open to those who:

- Accept the Beliefs of the Church,
- Meet the Church's qualification on Baptism,
- Commit themselves to serving Christ within the Church and beyond,
- Abide by the decisions of the Church Members' Meeting,
- Acknowledge their responsibilities as Church Members,
- Have their membership application accepted by the Church Members' Meeting.

Election of Deacons is usually carried out during the November church members meeting. Whether electing a new Deacon or re-electing an existing Deacon, a vote is carried out by the members during the meeting. The successful candidate(s) will be those receiving the highest number of votes, which must be not less than two thirds of the votes cast. A Deacon has to have been a member for at least six months, and usually serves a three-year term. They may stand for re-election at this point. Postal votes can be made by church members who are unable to attend the meeting; please ask the Church Secretary for a voting slip when the candidate(s) are announced. There will be a deadline prior to the meeting for postal votes to be included in the count.

Church Meetings are where members meet for Christian Fellowship, sharing the Lord's Supper and the transaction of the business of the Church. Normally they are held bi-monthly in the *Atrium* (see map, page 18) normally also comprising of a bring-and-share tea afterwards to encourage fellowship together.

Annual General Meetings (AGM) are held principally to review the previous years activities, as depicted in the Annual Report and Accounts* which are prepared by the Trustees. The AGM is normally held in May at the same time as the bi-monthly church meeting. **Elections of Church Secretary & Church Treasurer** are also carried out during the Annual General Meeting. Both Church Officers are nominated from within the Diaconate.

*As we are a registered charity, we compile and submit an **Annual Report & Accounts** to the charity commission each year. The report defines who we are, what we do etc, as well as giving an update on all the church activities and groups during that financial year period (Jan 1st to Dec 31st). Hard copies of the report are normally available two weeks prior to the AGM, so that the report can be read by church members beforehand.

Sundays

We begin our morning service at 10:30am, which normally contains: prayers, a 'children's talk', readings, songs, hymns, as well as a message.

Children leave for their Sunday School group (from age 3) part way through the service, where they have fun, play games and learn about the Bible. This is usually held in the Fellowship Hall. There is no Sunday School during August; these weeks are run by parents who normally show a Bible DVD and play fun games. Becky Stennings, Emma Scott and Trudi Gooden are the Sunday School leaders.

Children under 3 have the use of a **Crèche** room (parents / carers must accompany). It is in an adjacent room off the Friendship Lounge, with a window view into the main church. There is also an audio connection to the main service via a speaker so you can still hear and see everything that goes on in the service.

On the first Sunday of the month, the service includes **Holy Communion**. This is open to all who declare that Jesus is their Saviour. We take a portion of bread (or gluten-free wafer) to represent Christ's body; this to show our individual commitment to Him. We then take a small cup (containing grape juice) representing Christ's blood being poured out to us on the cross; we wait until everyone has a cup then we drink it together. This displays the unity of the Church. Holy Communion is also included during several other special services and church meetings throughout the year.

After the service, if you would like prayer one-to-one with a member of the prayer team, please make your way to the **Quiet Room** (off the Friendship Lounge). A member of the prayer team there will be delighted to pray with you.

Refreshments are served in the Friendship Lounge after the service, please stay and make new friends over a cuppa and a biscuit (and sometimes cake!).

Every other month we hold a **Parade Service**. These services are attended by the Boys Brigade and/or Girls Brigade. The format is family oriented and Sunday School stays in the main service. The Crèche room is available if required (see above). Parade services are not filmed 'live-streamed' or recorded; DVD's of the service will not be made available on such occasions.

We love the opportunity to baptise new believers at PABC. **Baptisms** normally take place during the morning service. If you would like to know more about baptism, we would encourage you to speak to the Minister or the Ministry Deacon who would be happy to explain to you what it is and guide you through the next steps.

During some morning services we also dedicate babies and infants to God; through this dedication we are basically giving thanks to God for the gift of life. As the Church (i.e. the wider family), we collectively promise to support the parents and the child as they grow up in the fellowship.

Other special services are held during the year; including Easter, Church Anniversary, Harvest Thanksgiving and Christmas.

In the morning service we worship in many ways. We have a **Worship Group** of musicians and singers who lead us in a mix of traditional hymns and contemporary songs. The words of the songs and hymns are projected onto a large screen at the front of the church. Alternatively, the words of most songs can be followed using song books. Please ask a steward when you enter the church on a Sunday and they can lend you a copy.

(continued)

One Sunday in June or July is designated as our **Church Anniversary**. We normally invite a special guest speaker, then after the service we join together for a **Fellowship lunch**, which is held in the *Welcome Hall* (see map, page 18). This is an excellent time to mix and have fellowship with others over a tasty meal. In the weeks leading up to a Fellowship Lunch, a list is provided at the back of the church hall for people to sign up so that we know the numbers to cater for. On the day if you haven't already signed up, please still come, there will be enough for everyone. A small contribution will be asked for to cover the cost of the food. Any surplus money will be given to an organisation, e.g. Operation Agri, at the Harvest Thanksgiving lunch. We normally ask for £5 for an adult and suitable donation for a child, however, please let the Church Secretary know if this donation would be difficult to afford, don't let this deter you from attending.

In the church there is a loop system available, so those with a hearing aid can change it to the setting 'T' for a clearer sound. The Minister and other participating people who speak at the front will use microphones, so you should be able to follow the service clearer.

During the Covid-19 lockdown period, in 2020, PABC invested into technology that can film and record the service. This was paid for by a generous gift, bequeathed to the church in the Will of a church member. Most Sunday morning services are recorded and live-streamed. Where there is a potential safeguarding risk, i.e. parade service which includes members of the Boys Brigade and/or Girls Brigade, the service is not recorded. The services that are recorded are available via the church website, or the church's YouTube Channel. Alternatively, DVD's of Sunday morning services are available upon request to the Church Secretary. These can be then listened / watched at home for those who are house-bound, or unable to access internet technology.

Sunday services and many other church activities the world over could not happen if it wasn't for an army of volunteers. As such, there are several **Rotas** for varying roles which we encourage people to sign up for so that we can support and serve others. Some of these include: stewarding, serving teas & coffees, flower arranging, Bible reading & technology support (sound & projection). During the week there are also opportunities to volunteer for service, like visiting folk (see page 9), and helping with the Saturday Coffee Morning. If you are able to help in any of these areas, please can you seek out our Church Secretary. Whatever the task, however big or small, everyone is equally important and valued for the gifts they use in the service to Christ's church.

Financial Giving

Gift Aid - If you are a British tax payer and decide to financially support PABC, then we would encourage you to help make your giving go further by allowing PABC claim 25p in every £1 you donate as a 'tax back' from the Government – this process is called Gift Aid. Please ask our Church Treasurer for a Gift Aid form; when it is submitted, the church can then financially benefit even more for every offering and donation you make.

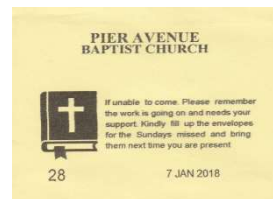
Regular tithing, giving and one-off giving - Giving financially is important to help the church further God's work through our many groups and initiatives, support our Minister and also keep our church buildings in good working order. The main ways of giving are:

- i. Place money in the collection box on the table just inside church at the Sunday morning service, or
- ii. Place a regular Gift Envelope containing your offering into the collection box (as above), or
- iii. Set up a standing order, that donates to PABC directly from your bank account, either weekly/monthly/annually.

Any of these ways is equally generous and most welcome, however if you are able to give by standing order then it helps our planning and budgeting for current and future projects immensely, as we have a view of what money has been pledged throughout the year.

Whether you choose option ii) or iii) or both, if you are a British tax payer, please can you consider to Gift Aid your donations (see above).

Gift Envelopes - If you would like to give by cash / cheque and would like Gift Envelopes for your donation, please speak to our Church Treasurer. An example of the envelope is shown on the right. These are dated (Sundays) throughout the year. Please place your donation (cash or cheque) in it, seal it up and write your Gift Aid code (if you have one) on the envelope then place it in the offering bag on a Sunday morning, or give it directly to our Church Treasurer.



All Gift Envelopes and Gift Aid Envelopes are confidential. The Treasurer only records who has given under the Gift Aid Scheme and this is because the gifts have to be totalled on an annual basis for submission to the HMRC. Annually the total of Gift Aided gifts is communicated to the donor, including how much tax will be claimed back under the Gift Aid scheme. You may need this value when filling in your annual self-assessment to HMRC. If the Gift Aid value to be claimed is higher than the tax you have paid in the year, the Church Treasurer is able to reduce the reclaim value.

There are also some general Gift Envelopes at the back of the church, if you would like to give some money to a particular cause or group within the church, such as the Premises Project or Enfold Project, or one of our specified charitable causes such as Operation Agri; by writing on the envelope where you would like this particular money to be used. If you have a Gift Aid code, remember to write this on the envelope. All unmarked donations will be attributed to the General Offering or Gift Aid Offering as relevant.

Thank Offering - For our church anniversary, the church leaders communicate to the congregation which cause or project we would like to support that year. A letter explaining what the money will be used for is given out on a Sunday morning prior to the anniversary, along with it is a Gift Envelope entitled 'Thank Offering'. Please prayerfully consider if you can support this, and place your donation in the envelope. If you are able to Gift Aid the donation, please remember to write your Gift Aid code on the envelope. Please place the envelope in a collection bag as soon as you can. We will accept envelopes for three weeks or so after the Anniversary Sunday (or after any other one-off Appeals, such as Harvest or Christmas) for those who have not been able to be at church at that time.

Church Groups

Butty and a Prayer (our Men's Prayer Breakfast) usually meets once a quarter and starts at 9.00am in the *Atrium* (see map, page 18) on a specified Saturday. This is an opportunity to enjoy some bacon butties, chat with each other, worship, prayer and listen to a speaker. We have not been able to restart this group since our return from Covid-19, we hope begin again soon.

Pudding and a Prayer (our Women's Prayer Afternoon) usually meets once a quarter and starts at 3.00pm in the *Atrium* on a specified Saturday. We start with a choice of puddings, which is followed by a time of worship and a short talk. We end the afternoon with interactive prayer activities. We have not been able to restart this group since our return from Covid-19, we hope begin again soon.

1st Clacton-on-Sea Girls' Brigade, meet during school term times on the church premises on a Tuesday evening: 6:00pm - 7:30pm (Explorers & Juniors), 7:30pm - 9:00pm (Seniors & Brigaders). Our company was established in 1922, and we currently have around forty girls in attendance. We have games, craft, Bible stories, songs, cooking, camp, sleepovers and much more. For further information please speak to Gill Stennings (Captain).



Most **House Groups** start at 7.30pm on the first and third Wednesday of the month. It is a small group that meets in someone's house where we study the Bible and support each other through prayer. However, there is also a **Church House Group** which meets in the Friendship Lounge, also on the first and third Wednesdays of the month, at 9.45am. From time-to-time all the House Groups meet together in the Fellowship Lounge for a Prayer Meeting. Everyone is welcome to attend, even if you don't normally attend a House Group. If you would like to know more, or join a group, please speak to the Church Secretary.

Prayer@Church is a group that meets on the last Tuesday of each month, in the Quiet room. A time for collective prayer for the church and the community. It is led by different people each week, facilitated by Karen Rai if you would like to know more.

During 2023, **Walk & Talk** was started, it offers the opportunity to get together and chat whilst walking in the fresh air, along the beachfront. Meeting at the Pier at 12.15pm, then heading out at 12.30pm, usually ending up with a cuppa somewhere. Please speak to James Patterson for further information, and to let him know you are intending to go (so they don't start walking off without you!).

The **Sport & Social Group** also started in 2023 offers time together playing sport, such as Badminton and Table Tennis, as well as chatting over a cuppa and biscuits, and the odd game of Uno and other board games. This occurs on Thursday evenings (not last Thursday of the month), in the Welcome Centre at 7.30pm. The group does not usually meet during the winter months. Please speak to Ian Day for further information.

*Both **Walk & Talk** and **Sport & Social Group** offer opportunities to get to know each other further, in a relaxed way, supporting fellowship and mutual support. All are welcome to attend.*

Church Premises

Halls for Hire

There are three main areas of the church which are normally hired out: Friendship Lounge, Fellowship Hall & the Welcome Centre. The Welcome Centre comprises of the Welcome Hall and the Atrium. Please refer to the map on page 18 to view the church site plan, and hall photos on page 19. The hall hirers from our local community carry out a broad range of activities on our premises, including: Dancing (ball room, tea dance, majorettes & fitness), Darby & Joan, Guides/Brownies/Rainbows/Rangers, Girls Brigade, FoodCycle (making use of surplus supermarket produce by cooking it up for the public for free), STEAM Education (an educational club for children in school holidays), groups for the disadvantaged and vulnerable, as well as many one-off events like children's birthday parties, coffee mornings and fundraisers.

Hall Bookings

The halls can be booked to those within the church and hired by local community organisations and individuals. For further information regarding details of hall availability and rates of hire, please speak to Ian Day who is our Hall Bookings Administrator. We won't ask for the full going hourly rate on hall usage by church members, however a contribution which goes towards heating, lighting etc would be most appreciated.

Premises Maintenance

Hiring out the halls is a major contributor to our overall church income, it is important that we keep the whole building in good condition to maintain this income. Tony Meloy is responsible for the maintenance of the premises. Please speak to him if you notice anything relating to the building and contents which is damaged or not working.

Church Garden

The garden in front of the church is maintained by Georgina Sherry, if you are able to lend a hand with this activity, please speak to Georgina.

General Guidance

If using a hall somewhere on premises, please be aware of the Fire Procedure, location of: fire doors, fire extinguishers, first-aid kits and accident books. The church premises are a nut-free and alcohol-free zone, please be mindful of others.

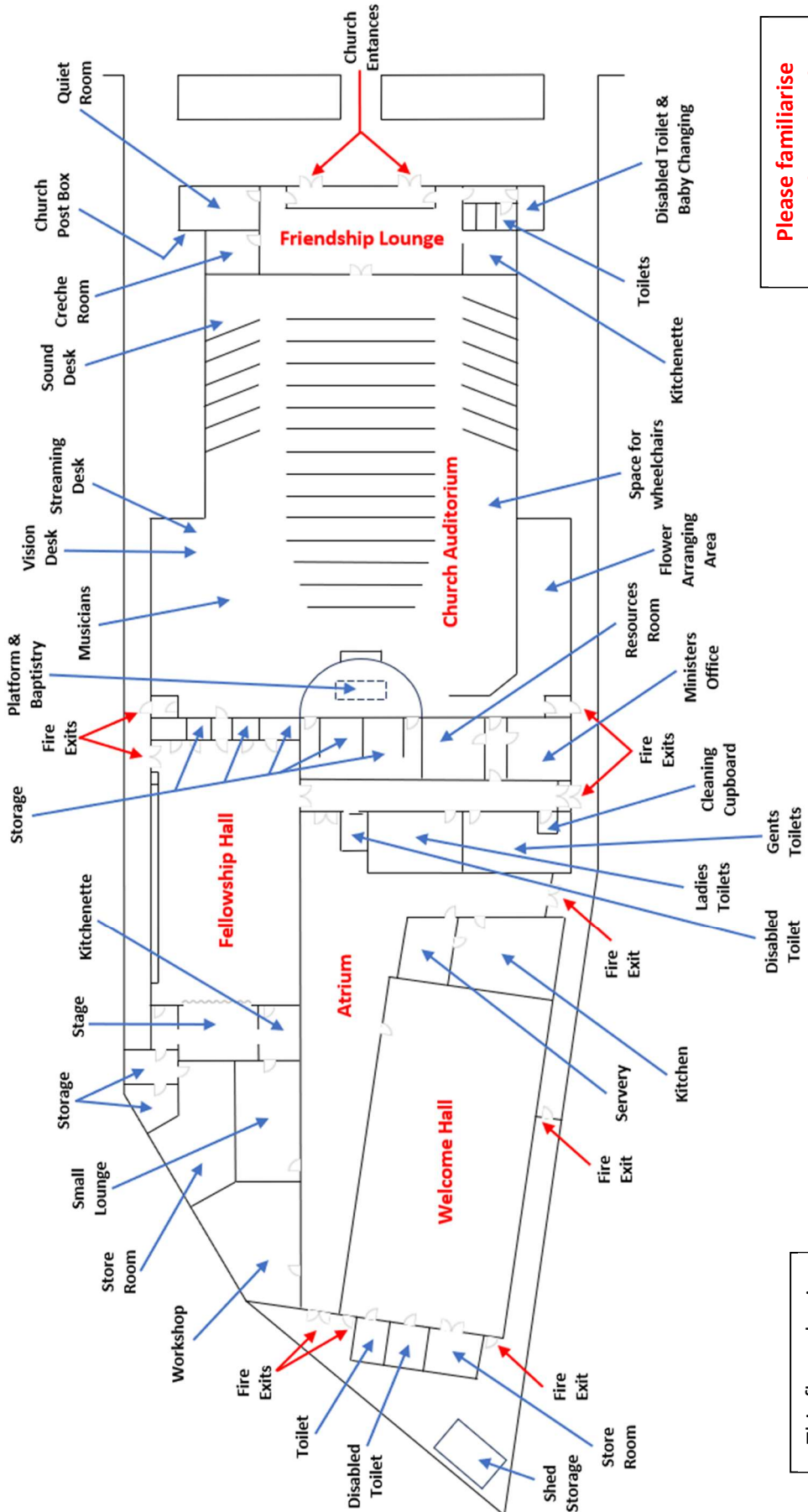
We endeavour to recycle where possible, we have re-cycling bins on the premises for these specific articles.

Please leave the premises in a state you wish to find it in, please remove litter, keep furniture tidy, all doors closed (to assist in fire safety), turn off appliances, heating and lighting if you have turned them on in the first place. Please also wash up & dry any glasses, cutlery or crockery that has been used, and put back in the cupboards or drawers where they were found. Also please wipe down any surfaces, ready for the next user.

If items have to be stored on premises, please inform Tony Meloy before any storage takes place, to ensure space is available, and does not interfere with other storage arrangements. Storage of personal belongings on site is not advised, as it will not be insured.

Church Map

Pier Avenue (road)



Please familiarise yourself with the fire procedure, a copy is by each fire exit door

This floor plan is representative and is not to scale

Church Halls

The church premises can be a bit daunting at first, the layout seems a bit of a labyrinth of halls and rooms. Below are photos of each of the main halls & rooms (please refer to map on page 18 for locations):

The Welcome Hall



Atrium



For information, the 'Welcome Centre' refers to the Welcome Hall & Atrium combined.

Kitchen



The Fellowship Hall



The Friendship Lounge



The Quiet Room



Community Activities

Tiny Treasures is our group for baby & toddlers and their family members. It is held every Monday during term time between 9.30am – 11.30am in the Fellowship Hall.



The **Enfold Project**, which began in 2012, is now well established and serves breakfast to approximately 30 homeless & vulnerably housed people each week. The Enfold project is staffed by a team of volunteers from our church and others. Job Club volunteers also attend to offer help and guidance to our visitors, as well as 'Peabody', who deal with housing and benefit issues. Our Parish Nurse (Amanda Day) runs this **Enfold** group along with a team of volunteers, mostly from PABC. It is held on Thursdays, between 9.30am to 11.00am in the Welcome Centre.

The **Shed Project** is an extension of Enfold. At the back of our church is a Shed. Not for storage of whatever you find in sheds but a Community Shed open to everyone. It's a place to pursue practical interests at leisure, to practice skills and enjoy making and mending. It's about social connections and friendship building, sharing skills and knowledge, and, of course, a lot of fun. We have not been able to restart this group since our return from Covid-19, we hope begin again soon.

We run **Coffee Morning** every Saturday between 9.30am to 12.00pm in the Friendship Lounge and outside when weather permits. They serve hot and cold drinks, as well as toast and an assortment of home-made cakes. Please speak to Karen Rai if you are able to join the voluntary team in serving, or willing to provide cake.

We also run a **Winter Warm Hub** and a **Social Hub** for the rest of the year, serving our community, where a wide mix of local people attend. We offer a safe and warm environment, with free refreshments, which provides social interactivity for those who are lonely or vulnerable. This is held in the Friendship Lounge on Wednesdays, 12.00pm to 1.30pm. Please ask Amanda Day for further information.

2023 was the third year PABC hosted a **Christmas Tree Festival**. We invite various clubs / groups / organisations from within the church, the community and those who hire halls during the year to decorate a tree, with narrative which tells others what they do.

External Organisations Supported by PABC

BMS World Mission



BMS works among some of the most marginalised and least evangelised people, in some of the most fragile places on earth. They aim to bring life in all its fullness through seven key ministries: church, development, education, health, justice, leadership and relief.

'Evangelism, church planting and supporting indigenous pastors: BMS World Mission church ministries are transforming lives. When you give to BMS, you help us to send church planting teams among people who have never heard the gospel. You employ pastors and support new and historic unions of the faithful. You nurture culturally relevant expressions of Christianity and pioneer expressions of Church, led by local believers. You provide discipleship training for new Christians and support local Churches as they serve and reach out to their communities in practical ways. You make the love and saving power of Jesus known. Through BMS Church ministries, every day, you are growing and strengthening the Body of Christ.'

Find out more at: www.bmsworldmission.org

Home Mission (EBA) - The Home Mission fund is the "Baptist Family Purse", it enables Churches across the whole country to support one another in mission and outreach. Usually, a Church can apply for financial assistance if it would be unable to engage the services of a Minister without the fund. Home Mission Funding is intended so that, through ministry and outreach, the Church can grow in the way God wants His Church to.



**Eastern
Baptist
Association**

Find out more at: www.easternbaptist.org.uk



Operation Agri is a volunteer-led charity supporting overseas Christian partners, who understand the needs in their communities. With their help, they bring self-respect and new hope to some of the world's poorest families, showing them Christian love and care. Our Operation Agri representative, is Chris Brooks.

Find out more at: www.operationagri.org.uk

National & International appeals - usually in response to DEC Appeals. DEC is 'Disasters Emergency Committee', a UK national body who on their website state, "DEC only appeal when we know we can help. We bring together 14 leading UK aid charities in times of crisis". PABC supports various disaster relief appeals as the need arises.

Other Gems

The Baptist Missionary Society run a **BMS Birthday Scheme** and Victoria Oyekunle is our Church's Co-ordinator. You will receive a birthday card on your birthday and inside it will be an envelope in which you may make a donation to the work of the BMS, thus giving you a chance to give something back at your special time of the year. Victoria will collect your gift which is then passed to the Church Treasurer for onward payment to the BMS. Victoria would be delighted to welcome you to the BMS Birthday Scheme.



Table Top Sales are held time to time to raise money for the church. They are held in the main church building on Saturday mornings whilst the coffee morning is in progress.

Occasionally we hold events like **Quiz Nights & Tea Dances** to raise money for a particular project or cause. These are normally fun afternoons / evenings, please support them if you are able.



Church Keys - For the leaders of various activities of the church, we issue out door keys so that entry to the church can be made at any time. David Baines manages the issuing of the keys to group leaders.

The Giving Machine – if you create an account or login on the website (below), then you can select up to 4 local or national charity causes you wish to support. Then, whenever you carry out internet shopping, the nominated charity cause(s) can receive funds for free. You also join for free. 'Pier Avenue Baptist Church' is listed as a charity which can be selected, please can you support us in this way if you are able. Any monies raised this way go directly towards the Enfold Project. Thank you. *Find out more at:* www.thegivingmachine.co.uk



Glossary

Definition of terms used in this guide:

Baptism	The act of being immersed into water (to symbolize the fact that we are dead and “buried” to an old way of life) and raised back out of the water (to symbolize the fact that we will one day be raised up to heaven). It is a testimony to the World of our commitment to Christ and an act of obedience to our Lord.
Baptist	Baptists are Christians who emphasize baptism by full immersion following commitment to Jesus Christ.
Communion	see Holy Communion.
Deacon	Literally a servant. An office of servant ministry within the Church, as found in the Bible (see 1 Timothy 3 : 8 – 13).
Diaconate	The collective group of Deacons who meet together to serve the Church.
Disciple	Someone who believes in and follows (obeys) the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ is called His disciple.
Ecumenical	i, Representing a number of different Christian Churches. ii, Seeking or promoting unity between different Christian Churches.
Evangelisation	The sharing of the gospel of good news about Jesus Christ.
Evangelism	Evangelism means sharing the good news about Jesus Christ. This can be done one-on-one (person to person). It can also be done in large “evangelistic” meetings. Doing the work of evangelism means telling others about what Jesus has done for them, providing them with an opportunity to receive Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Saviour.
Fellowship	i, (verb) - The relationship between believers and the between believers and the Lord. ii, (noun) – the gathering together of Christians in the name of Jesus.
Holy Communion	The word “communion” emphasizes the fellowship we have with the Lord Jesus Christ and with other Christians in sharing the bread and wine. The bread representing His body broken for us all on the cross; the wine to represents the blood being shed for us.
Lord’s Supper	see Holy Communion.
Minister	Someone authorised by a Church to do things such as preach sermons; lead religious services such as weddings, baptisms or funerals; provide spiritual guidance.

(continued next page)

Ministry	A 'work' where someone dedicates their time to God which benefits the Church. This can be demonstrated in many ways; some examples include: serving refreshments after the service, driving members of the congregation to and from church, producing the Notice Sheet and many more areas of service.
Mission	A specific plan to outreach to those who have not heard the Good News of God. This can be anywhere, not just overseas.
Padre	A member of clergy (someone who works for the Church eg a Vicar, a Minister) assigned to one of the armed services.
Parade Service	A bi-monthly Sunday morning service where the Boys Brigade and Girls Brigade parade their colours (flag).
Pastoral	To care for, nurture and guide believers.
'Walk of Faith'	This term is used to describe a Christian's journey trusting God.

Abbreviations

Most organisations use abbreviations, we're no different. Here are some you may hear on occasions at church, or within this guide:

AGM	Annual General Meeting
BB	Boys Brigade
BMS	Baptist Missionary Society*
BUGB	Baptist Union of Great Britain
CTIC	Churches Together in Clacton
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
DEC	Disasters Emergency Committee
DPS	Designated Person for Safeguarding
EBA	Eastern Baptist Association
GB	Girls Brigade
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations
PABC	Pier Avenue Baptist Church

*however, the organisation is now known as '*BMS World Mission*' (see page 21)