

MELKSHAM UNITED CHURCH (Methodist/URC)

Church Profile for 2020



Our Mission is to be a community for Christian people within the Methodist and URC traditions in and around Melksham. We aim to provide a centre for worship, prayer and fellowship; to care for one another and to encourage young people in the Christian Faith.

We work with the ecumenical Melksham Family of Churches to seek to bring the Good News about Jesus Christ to the people of Melksham and the wider world through the work of the church and our own lives in the community.

The Church and congregation

Melksham United Church building is Grade II listed, occupying a high profile location on the High Street in the market town of Melksham in West Wiltshire. In 2011 we completed a major refurbishment of the worship area which included replacing the pews with comfortable chairs, and installing a new heating system. We now have a versatile, light and welcoming building easily adaptable for services, other church activities and community letting to outside hirers. We have a number of banners made in the past by a craft group and individual Church members.

We value a high standard of preaching style both traditional and appropriate to 21st century. The monthly Sacrament is celebrated alternately in the Methodist and URC style, and other forms are welcomed.

The congregation averages around 35 to 45 at Sunday morning services, with a church membership of 53. Coffee is served following the morning service and this has proved to be a very pleasant time of fellowship. We have a predominately "mature" congregation but are blessed with a worship leader and a good number of people prepared to take part in various aspects of worship.



Although few in numbers our young people are cared for in worship and learning with twice monthly Junior Church. We have a staffed children's corner with books and simple activities for any who remain during a service. We would appreciate the occasional all-age worship service. We are fortunate to have a number of leaders to ensure we fulfil the criteria for Safeguarding.

There is a twice monthly Bible study gathering and we are praying for ways this can be improved. Between 6 and 10 people attend and there are a few people willing to lead. The group is studying some of the smaller books of the Bible and appreciates the support of the minister when he/she is available.

There is a strong network of pastoral Carers within the Church so that each member of the congregation has a Pastoral Carer but we are aware of a need to expand this so it is not too onerous on any individual carer. We also have a prayer Circle which is greatly appreciated.



The church owns a fine historic pipe organ. It has two manuals with a pedal organ and a wide selection of stops. It is manned by a rota of organists supplemented by organists from other Area churches and a digital hymnal.

Technical details of the organ specification are contained on the Melksham page of the Area website.

In addition to our worship and Christian growth, we aim to be a good neighbour and reach out and show God's love to the wider community. Within the past 4 years we have started "Little Gems", a weekly parent/carer and toddler group. This has been much appreciated by on average 25 parents/carers who have formed strong friendships.

In conjunction with a local undertaker, a fortnightly Friendship Group has been formed where recently bereaved or lonely people meet for tea and chat, possibly play board games, do some craft activities or go on outings. Earlier this summer they went for afternoon tea at a local café and on another occasion went on the canal in a pleasure boat. As well as providing a community support, this has brought new people into worship.

There is a weekly Hope Debt Advice counselling service supported by the Melksham Family of Churches with grants from other local organisations as well, staffed by people from a variety of Churches in the town and other volunteers.

The Minister is supported by a strong Church Council who play a leading role in the running of the Church, and by a team of Pastoral Carers who keep in regular contact with members on their lists and alert the Minister when necessary. A number of Active sub-committees are in place: Worship; Property & Finance, Pastoral Carers, Junior Church leaders and Social Events. The church also has representatives on the Area Meeting and is entitled to have a representative on the Melksham Family of Churches' Council but at the moment we are unable to find a representative to attend.

With watchful accounting by the Treasurer we consider ourselves to be financially sound and able to pay our assessment, running costs and repairs etc.

We support a number of charities throughout the year especially when we use orders of service from a charity or a visitor from a charity to cover the "Local Arrangements" on the plan.

The church and ancillary rooms are well cared for and of a satisfactory standard. The vestibule consists of a Minister's vestry; a small store; a servery and a toilet. The vestibule itself can be used as a meeting place, and is hired out to other users on a regular basis.



Upstairs there is additional seating in the gallery and a church office which houses a photocopier and has an internet link.

Facilities to the rear of the building consist of a kitchen which has been totally refurbished this year, toilets (including a disabled toilet), a large upstairs room, a medium downstairs room and a pleasant lounge, all of which are let out to other groups on a regular basis.

We are fortunate to have a number who are able to undertake much of the property maintenance work, so keeping down costs.

Our ancillary rooms are let on a regular basis to outside organisations such as Multi-Faith Forum (help with English Language); St. John Ambulance (run youth and adult training); Alcoholics Anonymous; One Voice (a community choir); Link hold a weekly coffee morning (provide transport to hospital etc)

We are now seeking a Minister from the Methodist Church to take up the appointment at the start of the Connexional Year in September 2020. A Minister who can not only support the spiritual and pastoral needs of a diverse but predominantly elderly congregation, but also help us to encourage younger people to become an active part of the family of God.



Church set up for coffee morning



Lower Hall. Church lunch



Rear Hall Lounge Area



Main Church worship area



Sunday Serenade concert



Upper Hall at Rear