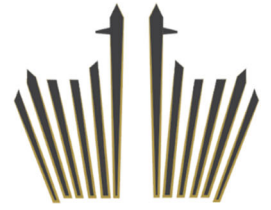


# SOUTHGATE church Bury St Edmunds



## Church Information Pack

Southgate Church is a Local Ecumenical Partnership between the Church of England, The United Reformed Church and the Baptist Union of Great Britain

[www.southgatechurch.org.uk](http://www.southgatechurch.org.uk)

01284 703705

[office@southgatechurch.org.uk](mailto:office@southgatechurch.org.uk)

Registered charity number 1115737

## **Summary**

Southgate Church is a welcoming evangelical church serving a local community of over 5000 people, three local schools and West Suffolk Hospital.

We seek to build spiritual maturity through our worship times, prayer, preaching, Bible study house groups and outreach both to the local community and further afield.

We have an expectation of sound biblical teaching grounded in the gospel message of the love of Christ freely available to all.

Our worship style is informal, using a mix of modern songs and traditional hymns.

We are a single congregation LEP with people from all church backgrounds and none.

We have a single membership roll, open to all who are committed to Christ irrespective of denominational background, and who have been Baptised, Confirmed or received the rites of a recognised Christian denomination.

Southgate Church is a member of the Evangelical Alliance and a Home for Good church.

We are seeking to appoint a full time Minister but would consider an appropriate part time candidate.

We are seeking a minister who will:

- celebrate, minister within and build upon Southgate's ecumenical context.
- model pastoral care and create a culture of mutual support.
- seek God's will for our church and help us to be obedient to it.
- inspire us to apply God's Word to our lives.
- understand 'discipleship as holistic' and as a lifelong process.
- help us to build strategically upon our existing outreach.
- be a proactive presence in the community.
- model evangelism as well as equipping the congregation to share God's story.
- lift our sights higher and raise our expectancy about what God can do amongst us.
- sensitively guide us through a process of further discernment before leading us into a period of change and growth.
- be intentional about pursuing growth and fruitfulness.
- where change is necessary, help us to adopt that sensitively.
- use the gifts of several members who are preachers and service leaders as well as the many church volunteers across the life of the church and community.

## **How best to describe Southgate Church?**

Following a meeting for the congregation, at which we discussed the identity of the church and our aspirations for the future, the following was agreed to describe our church, its purpose and its values:

### **WHO WE ARE:**

Southgate Church is a Local Ecumenical Partnership between the Church of England, the United Reformed Church and the Baptist Union of Great Britain.

### **WHY WE EXIST:**

“To be a community of Jesus followers committed to growing as disciples who share the love of God and see lives changed in the power of the Holy Spirit.”

### **HOW WE ASPIRE TO BE AS CHURCH:**

- **Worshipful** – in all we do we seek to praise our Creator God and give Him glory
- **Word Inspired** – our lives are based upon the Bible and the example of Jesus
- **Spirit Led** – prayerful in all we do, constantly seeking God’s direction and help
- **Relational** – love, authenticity, accountability, encouragement and practical care
- **Hospitable** – welcoming to all, seeking unity in the midst of our differences
- **Holistic Discipleship** – nurturing growth in ourselves and others in every aspect of life
- **Community Focused** – called to bless the Southgate area and the places where we live, work and play

We have identified our vision to grow disciples and further the Kingdom of God in our community by embracing new strategies and ideas while remaining true to the Gospel and Kingdom values.

Is God calling you to share in this vision?

Do you have a desire to facilitate church growth and lead a new generation of disciples whilst pastoring the current congregation?

Can you work with us, challenge us, guide, encourage, teach and enable us?

Are you able to be an additional presence for the church within the community?

## **Bury St Edmunds and Local Community**

Bury St Edmunds is a beautiful, historic market town in West Suffolk. The Medieval Abbey was home to the shrine of King Edmund, making Bury St. Edmunds an important place of pilgrimage,



second only to Canterbury.

Today the award winning Abbey Gardens are the centre piece of the annual floral display and a range of events including a large fireworks display. There is plenty for people of all ages to do in Bury St Edmunds. As well as high street brands there are many smaller independent shops in the town and a thriving market twice a week.

At the end of November, Bury St Edmunds hosts a Christmas market named the best in the country by Trip Advisor.

Restaurants, cafes and tea rooms cater for all tastes and, as well as a large multi-screen cinema, there is a smaller independent picture house.

The Theatre Royal, owned by the National Trust is the UK's only remaining Regency theatre and offers a vibrant programme of events throughout the year. A more modern venue is the award-winning Apex, home to music events of all sorts.

For 10 days every May, the Bury Festival brings performers of all genres to the town.

The town is also home to the Greene King Brewery and West Suffolk Hospital.

Bury St Edmunds has good transport links (road and rail) to Cambridge, Norwich, Ipswich and London.

Bury St Edmunds is a growing town and has good schools for all ages and an expanding college of further education and training.



Southgate Church meets in Southgate Community Centre and serves the Nowton neighbourhood, an area of mixed housing (mainly owner occupied), three schools, West Suffolk Hospital, local shops and amenities and two parks on the southern edge of Bury St Edmunds.



## Church Facilities

### Church House



A modern detached, extended 4-bedroom property will be available as the residence for the minister in accordance with their denomination's 'manse' arrangements.

The property is a short walk from the Church and in the heart of the estate.



It is close to Hardwick Heath and overlooks a very pleasant open green.

The estate is served by regular bus services to the town centre.

### Church Centre

The Church Centre will comfortably sit 60 in a meeting but is currently too small for Sunday morning services, which are held in the larger 150 seat Community Centre. The church has a purpose built baptistry, as well as a small kitchen, small office and an entrance lobby.



The Church Centre adjoins the Community Centre and there is easy access between the two. The Church shares an office and an Administrator with the Community Centre, which is located just inside the main Community Centre entrance. The office is open four days a week.

# **Outline Profile of Southgate Church**

## **A Brief History of Southgate Church**

Work began on Nowton Estate to the South of Bury St Edmunds in 1968 and as the houses and local facilities were being built, the Bury St Edmunds and District Council of Churches, (as it was then known), encouraged by the local authority decided to work ecumenically to provide a church for this new community.

In 1970 a Church Army captain was appointed to oversee the development of a Christian witness and the first Christian activity was a Sunday School held in the local Hardwick Primary School. In the same building, the first Sunday morning service for Southgate Church was held on Pentecost Sunday 1974.

When a Community Centre was built for the estate, local churches financed the provision of a church centre, attached to the main Community Centre building.

Southgate Church was formally established as an interdenominational Local Ecumenical Project (now Partnership) in 1978 with three partners, the Church of England, the United Reformed Church and the Baptist Union of Great Britain.

In 1979 the first ordained minister was appointed, jointly with the role of hospital chaplain, and by 1980 the congregation had grown to such an extent that morning services moved to the main hall of the Community Centre.

## **Southgate Church Today**

We have a morning congregation, most of whom come from the local vicinity, but drawn also from other parts of the town and the surrounding villages, of between 70 and 80 people, including a small group of children and young people.

We use the Main Hall in the Community Centre for our Sunday morning worship, placing our church at the heart of the community, in a building with which many local residents are already familiar.

Other rooms in the Community Centre provide space for our Sunday Clubs for children and young people and rooms for prayer and ministry, before and after the service.

The Church Centre is well used throughout the week by a wide range of groups, for all ages. Southgate Church is a member of the Evangelical Alliance, with a vision to bring Christ to our Community.

We actively support Open the Book in local schools, the work of Churches Together in Bury St. Edmunds and District, Bury Christian Youth (BCY), Chaplain in the Workplace and Town Pastors. We also support the Hospital Chaplaincy team at the local hospital and the practical wheeling of patients to and from Chaplaincy services.

Through our tithing we actively support our founding denominations and various Christian charities including Faith in Action in Malawi, Christian Aid, Tear Fund, and Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF).

Southgate Church supports Fair Trade and is registered as a Home for Good church.



## **Organisation and Governance**

### **General**

The Minister provides leadership to the Church and is supported in this by the Leadership Team of 3 members elected by church members. Nominations for the Leadership Team have to be approved by the Minister.

To help in overseeing the activities/life of the Church, several small teams have been established such as: Leadership, Pastoral, Family and Community, and Finance. These groups report progress and proposals to the Leadership Team.

In addition to the Minister, there are 2 paid members of staff:

- A full-time Family and Community (F&C) worker co-ordinates and plays a key role in a wide range of activities throughout the week. These include groups which meet in two local schools and the Pre School and events such as Messy Church This work is an important area of the Church's ministry.
- A part-time Administrator provides administrative support to the Minister and to the Church, as required. The current Administrator also works part time for the Community Centre.

### **Minister's Support**

It is anticipated that the Minister would prefer to arrange personal ministerial support via his/her denomination and/or his/her trusted mentors/colleagues.

As a local ecumenical church both the Minister and the Church are able to draw upon the experience and advice of our partner denominations via the Local Advisory Group (LAG). The LAG is a group comprised of three persons drawn from our partner denominations which meets a few times a year.



## **Charitable and Legal Status**

The church is a charity registered with the Charities Commission so can benefit from Gift Aid. In 2006, the Church also became a Company limited by guarantee to give it better protection.

Being a charitable company requires the Church to have effective governance in place, which is provided by the Trustees as the governing body. The Minister may become a Trustee, if he/she wishes, and meets the legal requirements to become a Trustee. If the Minister chooses not to become a Trustee, a standing invitation will still be given to attend the meetings of the Trustees.

There may be a maximum of 12 Trustees which includes:

the Minister (if opting to be a Trustee),

four external Trustees (3 supporting denominations plus the Parish Church),

three Leadership Team,

Church Treasurer,

Secretary to the Trustees,

plus two church members.

Technically our sponsoring body is Churches Together in Suffolk but that body has been dormant for many years regarding its work with LEPs.

Southgate Church Centre is held in trust under the Sharing of Church Buildings Act 1969.

## **Membership**

Members of the Church congregation indicate their commitment to supporting Southgate Church by becoming Church Members. Church Members meetings, at which members are updated on future plans and participate in making key decisions, are held at least 4 times a year.

We currently have a membership role of 70 people of mixed denominational backgrounds, or none.

## **Finance**

Southgate Church is entirely self-supporting financially. The Church has a policy of tithing 10% of the general giving. Gifts are directed to our supporting denominations, mission activities at home and abroad, and to national and local charities and community groups.

## Church Services



Our current service pattern is as follows:

### 1st Sunday

- Morning - All Age Worship called Together on Sunday (often led by our F&C worker)
- Evening – Communion/Breaking of Bread

### 2nd Sunday

- Morning – Worship Service (Worship together before children leave for various Sunday Clubs)

### 3rd Sunday

- Morning – Communion/Breaking of Bread (Worship together before children leave for various Sunday Clubs)

### 4th Sunday

- Morning - Worship Service (Worship together before children leave for various Sunday Clubs)

Sunday morning services are held at 10:30a.m. and last about 75 minutes.

Congregation sizes vary, but are typically 70-80 people, exceeded on special occasions.

Most of the congregation is over 65 and only a few in the 20 – 40 age range.

Around 10-12 young people attend Sunday Club every week and more attend mid-week activities.

There is a time of prayer for 30 minutes before the service and a dedicated team of people available to pray with members of the congregation after the service.

## **Other Church Groups – (More details on our website)**

**Prayer House** – every other week on a Wednesday in the Church Centre.

**House Groups** - which meet on alternate weeks for prayer and Bible Study. About 50 people regularly attend house groups.

**Church Weekend** - Held every two years at Sizewell Hall on the Suffolk Coast. This is an opportunity to deepen fellowships and friendships and receive teaching in a different way.

## **Community Contact Groups**

**Flower Ministry** – Welcoming and encouraging link with the community each week.

**CoffeeStop** – weekly free coffee and chat on a Monday morning. Open to all, 40+ attendees.

**Ladies' Thursday Group** – meets on 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month. 30-40 attending.

**Friendship Club** – (over 55's) meets on 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month. 40+ attending.

**Spots** – weekly Parents, Carers and Toddlers group

**Youth Club** – weekly school years 5 to 7, a time of fun and Christian teaching. Open to all.

**Liquid** – weekly school years 8 to 13, a time of fun, Christian teaching and challenge. Open to all.

**Bibles and Burgers** – monthly teenager bible study.

**Stradbroke Court** – monthly service/talk in a local sheltered housing complex.

## **Community Outreach Events**

**Summer Holiday Club** – four days of fun and bible teaching for Primary School aged children, attracting 40 children daily and a team of 35 volunteers to run it.

**Hearty Party** – Valentines day celebration of God's love. **Pancake Party** – to explain Shrove Tuesday. **Light Station** – as a positive family alternative activity on Halloween night.

**Messy Church** – currently quarterly on Fridays. Attracting 50+ non-church service attending people to share a meal and hear a story of God's love for them.

**Southgate's Got Christmas** – fun and activities with a Christmas message – attracting 300 people.

**Southgate's Got Easter** – fun and activities with an Easter message – attracting 90 people.

**Apex Events** – Arranging concerts by Christian artists at the town centre concert hall to raise funds for specific Christian charities.

**Schools Outreach** – **Wednesday Gang**, **Rock Solid** and **Open the Book** – engaging and Bible based teaching every week for 5 – 11 year olds.

## **Southgate Community Partnership**

Southgate Community Partnership (SCP) was founded in 2011 by the local Community Association and Southgate Church. The ownership of the Community Centre was handed over to this new charity by St Edmundsbury Borough Council to be run in the interests of the local population. The Church played a pivotal role in establishing this new body and continues to support and encourage the development of Southgate Community Centre in any way we can.

Each May Day, the church engages with the Southgate Community Partnership by helping to organise a Fun Day for the Community.

### **Useful Links for further information**

Southgate Church website: [www.southgatechurch.org.uk](http://www.southgatechurch.org.uk)

Address: Heron Walk

Bury St Edmunds

Suffolk

IP33 2QA

The Church Office is usually open weekdays, except Wednesdays, and is situated just inside the main entrance of Southgate Community Centre - address as above.

**Telephone :** 01284 703705

### **Churches Together in Bury St Edmunds and District**

Southgate Church is involved with Churches Together projects in the town.

<http://www.stedmundsburychurches.com>

### **Bury Christian Youth**

Christian schools-work charity based in and around Bury St Edmunds.

<http://www.bcy.org.uk>

### **Southgate Community Partnership**

[www.southgatecommunity.org.uk](http://www.southgatecommunity.org.uk)

### **Bury St Edmunds Tourist Office:**

[www.visit-burystedmunds.co.uk](http://www.visit-burystedmunds.co.uk)