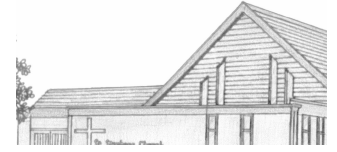


**Church Profile for  
St. Stephen's Church**  
High Street, Middleton, Manchester M24 6DX  
*'Reaching the Community for Jesus Christ'*  
Part of the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion



**Introduction**

We are a small evangelical church with a long history of work and witness in the town. As our Mission Statement shows, we are a Christ centred congregation, with a vision for 'Reaching the Community for Jesus Christ', and a heart for sharing God's love, and the saving message of the gospel with the area around the church, the town and the wider world.

Our church is a member of the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion, which is a non-hierarchical collection of evangelical congregations. Please visit the Connexion website ([www.cofhconnexion.org.uk](http://www.cofhconnexion.org.uk)) for more information.

**Church location**

The church is sited in the middle of a residential area in one of the highest parts of Middleton, and about 6 miles from Manchester City Centre. The area immediately around the church consists of mainly council housing, although there is also private housing nearby. Historically the church was the 'hub' of the community with a very large congregation and thriving children's ministry, but following the rebuilding of the area, connecting with the community has been more difficult. There are currently a number of hostels in the area and is in the most deprived area of Middleton, with much need in the immediate vicinity.



### **Our Church at present**

We are a mainly elderly congregation but all are united in the love for our Lord and a desire to share His love and saving grace with those around us. We are a welcoming church where all are respected and valued as we encourage and support each other in a daily walk with God based on scriptural principles. We have good working relationships with other local churches in the town, particularly two who are located close-by. Visitors to our church services always comment on the warm welcome and Christian friendship they receive when they are among us.



### **People**

Our average congregation at the moment is around 10-12 in number although we have around 20 on our regular church membership list. Most of those attending are aged 60+ with many retired; we do not have any children attending Sunday service regularly at the moment although each week we are prepared for if/when children join us.

There are currently 5 people on our church leadership team, covering areas of responsibilities for worship, children's ministry, prayer and bible study, strategic vision, mission and outreach.

We are registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and four of our leadership team are Trustees for this.

## **Church Services**

Our Sunday service usually follows a similar weekly format, although this can be flexible as the Holy Spirit leads. Within our service we always have a dedicated 'worship time' led by a small worship group (usually piano and brass) as well as a mixture of traditional and more modern hymns within the service. The main element of our service is a Bible based message, and we always include a time for corporate and personal prayer with opportunity for personal testimony as the Holy Spirit prompts. As we don't have a pastor at present, our services are usually led by a member of the Church Leadership Team and we are blessed to have a number of 'visiting speakers' who, along with a couple of our own congregation, come to bring God's word and message to us each week. Each of these servants has a different delivery style but all give us both challenge and blessing each time they come.

## **Other regular church meetings and outreach activities**

As well as our weekly Sunday service we also meet for a Midweek Prayer Meeting and/or Bible Study each week; this is held in a home so people can join via Zoom as well as in person.

We also have a monthly 'Coffee, Cake and Chat' (C.C.C.) morning attended by a few from the local community and other local churches.

During term time we run a weekly children's outreach club for children of Primary School age. We currently have up to 15 children attending, all of which are from the immediate community around the church.

There are other groups who use our premises on a regular basis: Middleton Brass Band rehearse in the Church Hall twice a week Middleton Music Society and Middleton Art Group also meet there once a week, and another church group uses the premises on a Sunday afternoon.

## **Missions we support**

We regularly support a number of mission organisations

- Sierra Leone Mission (Mission of the Connexion)
- Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion Mission and Development Fund
- TEAR Fund
- Middleton Food Bank

## **Church Buildings**

Our church has just had a year of celebration for 200 years of worship and witness on High Street (1824-2024). Our current church replaced

the old building in 1976 with our Church Hall being rebuilt in 1981. The worship centre seats around 200 and the Church Hall about 60 - 80.

The church also has a 3-bedroom Manse which is owned by the Connexion but is for our use as the home for our minister and family. We are responsible for maintaining both the Church and Manse buildings.

### **The Church we believe God wants us to be**

Over a number of years we have prayerfully felt God calling us to reach out more to the community around the church, sharing the love of Christ with them, we have tried to do this in a number of ways but with limited success.

### **The future**

After 200 years of worship and witness at St. Stephen's we believe God still has a plan and purpose for our fellowship, and He has work for us to do.

In order to fulfil His purposes we believe God wants us to

- Grow in our personal relationship with Him
- Deepen our understanding of His word and how we apply it powerfully to our personal life and relationship with others
- Reach out with Christian love and grace to the local community
- Be energised both with vision and numerical support for mission and outreach

The pastor we are prayerfully seeking is one with vision, called by Him to lead, encourage, empower and equip us in fulfilling the plans and purposes God has for our fellowship and the community around St. Stephen's Church.

### **Practical Information**

The position is part-time, up to 60% FTE. A three-bedroom Manse is provided with the position.

The appointment will be made in line with the Connexional guidelines and includes the approval of the Connexional Trustees. Anyone appointed will have to sign their belief and agreement to the Connexion Statement of Faith, which can be found at [www.cofhconnexion.org.uk/about-us](http://www.cofhconnexion.org.uk/about-us) . As such the appointed person will become a Connexion pastor, although any current affiliation with another denomination is accepted and welcomed.