

Westbourne Park Baptist Church

Church Profile April 2023



Introduction

Westbourne Park Baptist Church is in Central London approximately 15 minutes walk from Paddington Station. The church building is situated on the edge of Bayswater Ward, adjoining Westbourne Ward.

The church community is comprised of a worshipping congregation of around 100 on Sundays, including children and young people. The active church membership is currently 62 people, with a number of people currently having requested membership at WPBC.

Members of the church describe us as a warm and welcoming multi-cultural Christian presence in the area, comprised of like minded Christians who seek to love God and love people. The gathering of like minded Christians from countries across the world creates a diverse, accommodating church family, where people can find a place to belong. The church is community focused, caring and Christ centred.

Following the sudden death of our previous Pastor in November 2020 we entered a period of interregnum. The church has needed time to grieve and process what has happened and care for our pastor's family. We are now in the position to seek God's will and direction for our next pastor.

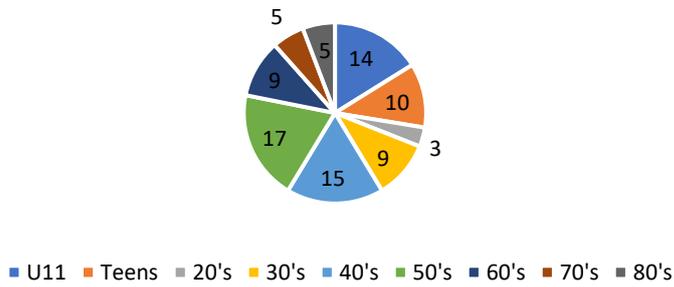
During this time, the church family has changed and new people have started attending the church, new projects have begun, and our purpose 'to build God's Kingdom wherever we are by Loving God and Loving People' has continued.

Westbourne Park Baptist Church Family

The church family is comprised of a diverse group of people, which brings vibrancy and energy into our intercultural church life. This is reflected in the worship and prayer life of the church.

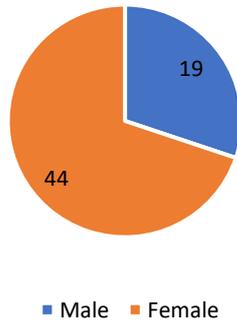
A review of our church database has shown the following makeup of WPBC church family, which presents helpful information towards the future needs of the church.

Age Profiles - Church Members and Children of Church Members



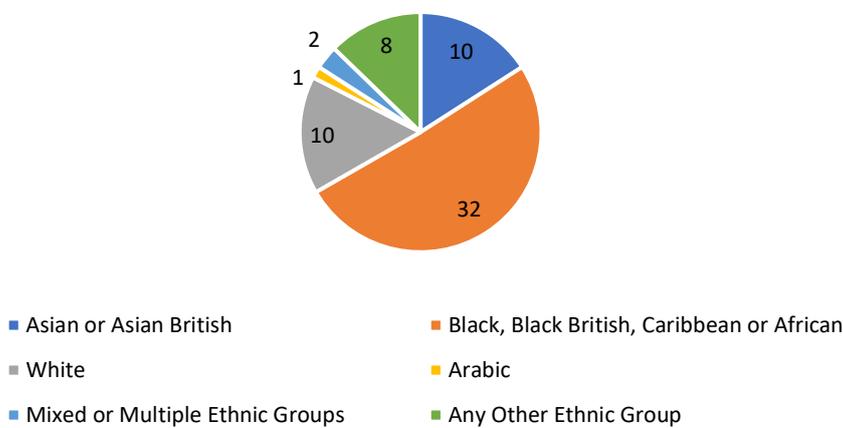
It is evident that the age of the church has increased, with the largest number of people over the age of 40. Many of these people have been in the church for over 20 years. Younger adults tend to move out of the area. There is a need to reach out to people in the 18 to 30's age range.

Gender Profile - WPBC Members



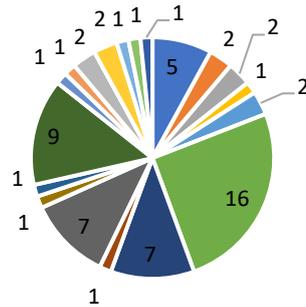
The church is comprised of 30% men to 70% women. Some men support each other through the Men's Fellowship. This is another aspect of WPBC that needs to be focused on to increase the balance.

WPBC Ethnicity Profile - Church Members



Using the ethnicity criteria in the 2021 Census, the pie chart indicates the ethnic profile of the church members.

Representation of Countries - Church Members



This has been broken down further to show the countries that are represented by the church family. It is of note that most members identify themselves as British, so this information is gathered from their home or parent's country.

Church activities

The church gathers for worship on Sunday mornings at 11:00am, with a worshipping congregation of around 100 people including children and young people. The worship style is Jesus centred, Spirit filled and sensitive to the congregation. Our services include participation from members of the congregation in leading prayers and bible readings. The sharing of testimony is encouraged.

We have children's and youth ministries running during morning services, for which we have recently had to enlarge our teams, as we have had an increase in children since lockdown, as well as children with special educational needs.

During the interregnum, members of the church have stepped up to preaching and sharing God's Word. There have been structured preaching plans, which have provided Biblical application to the challenges of life, encouraged people to look to Jesus and grow in their relationship with him.

We have been privileged to have had three baptisms since COVID restrictions were lifted, two infant dedications and a wedding within the church.

The church has Fellowship Groups which meet during the week, giving opportunity for discussion and reflection on the sermon, providing friendship and pastoral support. Attendance at Fellowship Groups has reduced over the last 2 years, and we are currently reviewing our small group options.

As well as through Fellowship Groups, pastoral care is provided by the Core Leadership Team, the Coordinators and the wider membership, supporting, praying and caring for each other, as well as those who pass through WPBC or connect from the local community.

The Intercessory Team of around 10 people have held prayer meetings every weekday during COVID, and these continue on zoom, with an additional prayer meeting on Sunday mornings. This faithful prayer has been significant to the church over the last couple of years. At the beginning of 2023 a monthly prayer evening was recommenced in the church.

Wider activities that are supported by members of WPBC include Westminster Street Pastors, with the Chair and administration being provided from WPBC, and 4 Street Pastors being WPBC Members.

WPBC Leadership Team

The leadership team is comprised of an eldership of 4 people, who are also Trustees of the Charitable Company, and 2 Deacons who were elected in January 2023. We have an Assistant Pastor who is employed for 24 hours a week. WPBC runs as a team leadership, with identified people who head up different areas of church life. We are in the process of implementing a new leadership structure, that provides flexibility for new initiatives to develop alongside established areas of church life. This will facilitate people to be able to pick up responsibility without having to commit to elected roles.

Westbourne Park Baptist Church Values

Church Members have compiled the following words to describe the values of WPBC



The younger members of our church family have contributed to our church profile and their views on WPBC are reflected below



And yes, we do have our own bouncy castle!

Moving forward, the church members wish to see a church that continues to be central to the local community, serving others through a range of activities that can uniquely be provided by the local church. The multi-cultural nature of the church is important to us, offering great richness, and this will be important to actively maintain.

We are hopeful for continued growth as a church, creating more balance in the age ranges across the church family, to provide strength for the church in the future. We realise the importance of continuing to grow and develop future leaders.

The spiritual life of the church is crucial, and we are committed to continue Jesus centred preaching and worship, with encouragement and challenge to grow. Serving God is considered a key aspect of our individual growth in spiritual maturity, and opportunities for everyone to serve in their area of gifting is important to us. Training and support for people to develop in areas of ministry within the church is another aspect of our future.

The church has been through a time of bereavement, and pastoral care has been challenged by COVID, lockdowns, being scattered as a church family, and the leadership being stretched during the interregnum. Re-establishing a structured pastoral care approach is another priority for the church.

Contributing to wider mission organisations

WPBC supports a number of mission organisations locally, nationally and internationally, examples of which are detailed below from our 2021/2022 support.

Local	National	International
Westbourne Park Family Centre	Baptist Home Mission	Baptist World Mission
Westminster Street Pastors	Parish Nursing Ministries UK	Wycliffe Bible Translators through support of Peter and Jennifer Brassington
Agape Arabic Christian Centre	CAP Christians Against Poverty	Margaya Fellowship, SriLanka supporting a church project
		Children's Uplift Project, Bangladesh

WP Venue is placed in a central location, opposite Royal Oak Tube Station and close to a number of main bus routes, providing easy access to many parts of London.

One of our main priorities for the Venue Team is to market the building to increase the rental income, in order to cover the costs of running the building and also to support the ministries and witness of the church.

The surrounding community

WPBC is located on the edge of Bayswater, amongst the wealthy, mainly privately owned housing of Bayswater and Queensway. Further into Queensway there are hotels and temporary housing. On the other side of the train line, the church and family centre connects with the less affluent Westbourne Ward, with mainly social housing amongst some privately owned flats.

The local populations are large and see a reasonable transience. They are represented by a diverse mix of different people from different cultures, social standings and religions.

Further information on the local council wards can be found on the links below:

[Westbourne \(Ward, United Kingdom\) - Population Statistics, Charts, Map and Location \(citypopulation.de\)](#)

[Bayswater \(Ward, United Kingdom\) - Population Statistics, Charts, Map and Location \(citypopulation.de\)](#)

The area is dissected by the A40 Westway fly over, the main train line from Paddington to the West of the country and the Grand Union Canal near Little Venice, stretching up to Camden to the east and out to the western parts of London and beyond.

There are a lot of active community groups and support systems within the community. Members of WPBC are in employed positions within local statutory and charitable organisations, education and the NHS. WPBC and WPFC link with these local groups and provide projects that meet the needs of the community as well as sharing God's love through presence evangelism and invitations to specific groups. Examples of this are the Pre-School Drop in groups, parenting support, weekly children's and youth activities, and half term holiday clubs provided by the Family Centre, as well as the church-led health and wellbeing projects including Westbourne Park Food Pantry, CAP Money Courses, and in the past Bereavement Support Groups. When the church building opened there were plans to set up a Memory Café to support people with dementia and their carers, as well as other groups to meet the needs in the local community. These plans will be revisited in the future, led by our Parish Nurse.

The main needs in the community identified by church members are affordable housing, crime solving, better policing, youth gangs, the impact of addiction to drugs and alcohol, overcrowded homes, financial challenges, play opportunities for children, parenting support, mental illness, depression and anxiety.

A group of church members, alongside All Nations Christian Ministries, who meet in the church building, are running the Celebrate Recovery Course, which started in September 2022 as part of our health and wellbeing support.

Wider Connections

WPBC connects with the following local and national organisations.



Together for God ~ churches in North Kensington and Chelsea and North Westminster

Central Cluster of London Baptists ~ pastor meetings



Our theological beliefs

Theologically WPBC is evangelical in nature. Our beliefs underpin our preaching, teaching and conduct within the church. We believe in God, the Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We believe in Jesus Christ, fully man and fully God.

We believe that all people are separated from God by their sin and that the Kingdom of God was brought into the earth by Jesus Christ. We believe in Jesus' death on the cross to pay the price for our sins, and in salvation by God's grace alone as a free gift received by faith in Jesus Christ.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, who lives in all believers to help us live the Christian life. We believe all Christians are part of Christ's body the Church as his representatives on the earth. We believe in Christ's return to bring in the Kingdom of God in its fullness.

We believe in the authority of the Bible in all matters of faith and conduct and prayerfully consider ethical issues that are important for the church to hold our position on in light of biblical teaching. An example of this would be that WPBC believe that marriage is a union between a man and a woman.

We teach believer's baptism by immersion, and encourage Christians to be baptised. However we have open church membership, and continue to support people towards baptism. We have an open communion table for those at the church service who know and love Jesus Christ.

The future ministry

Westbourne Park Baptist Church are prayerfully considering the next pastor for the church, believing God will lead us to the person He is already preparing for this role.

Importantly our future pastor needs to share the theological beliefs of the church.

As an inner city church we are praying for someone who has experience of inner city ministry, in a multi-cultural church, as we feel this will help the connection between the new pastor and the church family. The church has been reflecting on how we ensure inclusivity for people of all backgrounds and cultures in the church, and will continue this work, so it is important for our new pastor to be committed to enhancing our cultural diversity and building on what draws us together as well as honouring each other's differences. This may be evidenced by ministry that reflects a heart for communities beyond their own, reflected in relationships that have been built over the years. Having spiritual eyes that are sensitive to unconscious bias in areas of the church ministries, an understanding of different cultures and the experience of building relationships within the church and in the community will be invaluable to our church family.

We are praying for a pastor who is gifted in preaching God's word in an accessible style, focusing on Bible based teaching that is relevant to the congregation living in today's society. We pray for continued, and greater experience of God at work in building the church spiritually, and in our experience of the spiritual gifts.

There is opportunity and need for evangelism within the local area. The church mainly provides presence evangelism, and future programmes that are being explored will share God through focus on practical, emotional and mental health needs. Some members have expressed a desire for more upfront evangelism and opportunities for people to respond to Christ, and pray for a Pastor who has a heart for mission, and the ability to share the unwavering truth of the gospel with our community. We love having baptisms at WPBC and pray for God to bring an increasing number of people to Him. Whilst growth in numbers in the church is always encouraging, WPBC has a kingdom growth perspective, equally rejoicing in supporting people who move on to serve God around the country or in other parts of the world.

Our church profile has highlighted that we need to focus on growth of young adults, and encouraging men into the church. A Pastor who has experience and skills in working with the 20 to 35 year old age group would be beneficial to the church family.

The hope is for the future pastor to be a real team player, able to work with the leadership team and infrastructure that is in place, to provide training and invest in developing new leaders. There is also a role for networking with local churches and other Baptist churches in London, especially in the Central London Cluster of the London Baptists.

History of the church

WPBC was opened on the current site in 1877 by Rev Dr John Clifford, having opened as a congregation based in the home of Alice Ludford in Praed Street prior to this. For many years under John Clifford's ministry the church was a centre for preaching and teaching, and also an expression of a social ministry in the establishment of projects supporting education, housing and financial support.

There have been 10 pastors since then, and a faithful group of Christians have worshipped on the site, but with decreasing numbers in the post war period.

Rev Paul Jackson commenced his pastorate in September 1985. He introduced Oasis year teams in the late 1980's and God blessed the church with growth in numbers and younger people joining the church, some of whom have stayed in the area and continued to serve in the church.

Rev Dr Steve Latham began his ministry in 2000. Steve brought a pastoral focus alongside his prophetic gifting and the church continued to grow in numbers and spiritual depth. During his ministry, Steve began the vision and discussions around making the building more accessible and fit for future ministry. A project advisor was engaged and early architect plans were drawn up.

When Steve was called on to lecture at Spurgeon's College, God brought Rev. Jem Sewell to pastor the church and to pick up the mantle of the building project. Jem's project management background and attention to detail resulted in the amazing premises that God has blessed us with as a tool to serve Him and serve our local community. Jem's unexpected and untimely death, in human terms, has led us to this place in our church history where we are trusting God to lead us to the next pastor of WPBC.

Practical matters

The stipend: WPBC pay the BU recommended stipend plus 20%. In addition the church contributes to the pension for the pastor. This may be through the BU Pension Scheme, or the church has a payroll pension arrangement with Aviva with a 10% contribution from WPBC and 5% from the employee. Alternatively, we will contribute to a private pension with another provider if the pastor has a plan already in place. The church implements the Baptist Union Terms of Appointment, with some adaptations to bring terms and conditions in line with other staff.

Working hours: WPBC seek to be excellent employers for their staff team, and ensure everyone has reasonable working hours. The pastorate is a full time role, with expectation of one week day off of the pastor's choice and Saturdays off. Where pastors need to be present for events or meetings on Saturdays, a minimum of half day off in lieu is encouraged. The church aims to ensure pastors are free to prioritise family or personal time, and therefore is flexible for pastors to arrange their meetings and commitments around school times, family times, etc. We try to avoid evening commitments on every day of the week, and would encourage a pastor to have a maximum of 3 evening

commitments in a week. Holiday allowance for church staff is 30 days annual leave plus bank holidays. We encourage time for personal retreat and reflection as well as relevant study leave opportunities. We support the principle of sabbatical leave every 7 years of ministry. We use People HR / Access online app to request and record staff leave. The church has a number of policies and procedures relating to employment which are available on request.

Accommodation: The church owns the house adjacent to the church at 2 Westbourne Park Villas, which is used as the Manse. The accommodation is arranged over 3 floors and currently has a kitchen, dining room and shower room on the upper ground floor; a living room, double bedroom and study/small bedroom on first floor and 2 double bedrooms and bathroom on second floor.

The accommodation is flexible and has been used in different arrangements over the years depending on the needs of the pastor and their family.

The Manse has access to a small courtyard garden space. Both the front door and the garden have steps to access them, so the property is not suitable for people with disabilities. The church is open to renting an alternative property should this be needed.

The Manse has a separate one bedroom flat in the basement, which is rented at an affordable rate to a family in the church.

There is a driveway at the Manse. However, the church requests that the pastor applies for a Residents Parking Permit, which enables the driveway to be used for staff and occasional visitors. The pastor and their family can equally use it for their own visitors when needed. The church will cover the cost of the residents parking permit.

Office space: There is a shared Leadership Office in the church, which the pastor may choose to use as their main office. Some pastors have preferred to have their main office in the Manse. These options can be discussed depending on the preferences of the pastor.

Local information: The location of the church and house is ideal for local schools, with a lot of primary schools nearby and options for secondary schools slightly further away. The Porchester Hall, around the corner, has swimming and gym facilities. Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park are a short distance away, as well as many other parks with children's play areas. Westfield Shopping Centre is 4 tube stops from Royal Oak. There are options for eating out nearby on Westbourne Grove.

Further information can be obtained by contacting Elizabeth Welch, Assistant Pastor and Parish Nurse, elizabeth@wpbc.co