

welcome to  
**Salem Wesleyan Reform Church**  
**Barnsley**



Welcome to Salem, a traditional Evangelical Church located in the centre of Barnsley.

### **The Beginning**

The church was built on Blucher Street in 1825 as an impressive town centre Congregational Chapel with seating for 350 persons and a schoolroom. Classrooms were opened later in 1852.

The beginnings of the Wesleyan Reform Union go back to 1849, when numbers of people within the Wesleyan Church thought to be responsible for the preparation and publication of 'fly sheets' were arbitrarily expelled by the Wesleyan Conference. These 'fly sheets' were held to be critical of the Wesleyan Church (which joined with the Primitive and United Methodists to form the Methodist Church in 1932). Many of those ejected in this way, plus their many followers who stood for religious freedom, began to worship regularly from 1851 in the largest building in Barnsley - the Corn Exchange.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> January 1857, the 'Reformers' held a 'Day of humiliation, fasting, thought and prayer' for guidance. Later, they held a meeting in the vestry of Salem Congregational Church which was kindly loaned to them for the occasion. They set up a committee to look into the purchase of the Salem premises from the Congregationalists.

They negotiated and on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1857, the sale was agreed. The purchase price was £600, a considerable sum in 1857! Payment was made in installments over six months, the final payment of £100 being made on 19<sup>th</sup> May 1858. Salem Wesleyan Reform Chapel opened on 19<sup>th</sup> August 1858 and the adjoining schoolroom on the 15<sup>th</sup> November 1858.

Salem celebrated its centenary with a range of services and meetings between Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> March and Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March 1957. The main services were conducted by Revd C Finnemore of Norwich. The 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary services were relatively low key (although still a source of joy and inspiration), and were conducted by Philip Nuttall on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2007.

### **Evangelistic Witness**

Salem has, throughout its history, emphasised work and witness through evangelism. Salem is the 'mother church' of the Barnsley Circuit of the Wesleyan Reform Union of Churches, such that in the early days all the Circuit meetings were held at Salem. The development of the Barnsley Circuit went ahead and progressed through the involvement of Salem, in particular the Hunningley Church which opened in 1862 and Hoyle Mill.

Salem has always supported the Wesleyan Reform Union of Churches and has provided many national Presidents, the latest being Clifford Race (former Town Clerk of Barnsley Borough Council) in 1964. There is a brass memorial plaque in church, commemorating Clifford Race who died on 10<sup>th</sup> July 1986. He was a distinguished, devoted and lifelong member of the church. At present, Salem is involved in the governance of the Wesleyan Reform Union.

### **Salem Building and Worship**

The sanctuary area of Salem is Grade II listed. It had substantial expenditure in 2008 on re-roofing, electrical works and repairs to the pipe organ. The interior of the sanctuary is traditional, with an impressive high central pulpit beneath the organ loft. Salem values preaching excellence and part of the preaching is based on detailed explanations of whole books of the Bible.

Salem also values musical excellence and has only had three organists since 1910! Its rebuilt pipe organ is used for most services, with excellent playing of traditional and modern hymns, sung with gusto by a congregation that values the traditions of preaching and playing.

Salem is a forward looking fellowship that will use all forms of outreach to present the unchanging Gospel within a society and across a town that are changing constantly.

## **Our Hudson Taylor Heritage**

Salem Wesleyan Reform Church is situated on Blucher Street, just two minutes walk away from the town centre. One of Barnsley's famous sons, James Hudson Taylor, was born a stone's throw away from Salem, in Cheapside.

Hudson Taylor's father, James Taylor, ran a successful apothecary business. The shop at number 21 Cheapside overlooked the thriving Barnsley market on May Day Green. Amelia, Hudson's mother, raised their family in the living quarters which were situated at the rear and above the shop.

When James and Amelia discovered they were going to have their first child, they solemnly consecrated the unborn child to the Lord. They prayed:-

"Dear God, if you should give us son, grant that he may work for you in China".

James Taylor prayed with his children every day and encourage them to "Learn to love your Bible". He also taught the children "For God cannot lie. He cannot mislead you. He cannot fail".

For years, due to Hudson's poor health, his parents gave up on the thought that their son might become a missionary. However, after his conversion at the age of 17, Taylor offered himself to God's service, promising to go anywhere, do anything and undergo whatever suffering Christ's cause might demand. Distinctly, he heard God's call, "Then go for me to China".

Hudson Taylor sailed for China in September 1853. He arrived in China the following February. In 1865, he founded the China Inland Mission, as a faith mission. "God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supply" was one of Taylor's famous quotes. The mission he founded still thrives today as OMF International ([www.omf.org](http://www.omf.org)).

In February 2004, Brother Yun and Peter Xu came to Salem Church to celebrate 150 years since Taylor landed in China. Brother Yun said "It is as though Hudson Taylor handed a flaming torch to the Chinese Church and asked them to continue the race towards the finishing line".

In Salem Church there is a beautiful plaque given to commemorate the work of the Taylor family at Salem and also to acknowledge the work of God's humble servant Hudson Taylor who took the gospel to the heart of the Chinese Nation.

**We hope that you have enjoyed your visit.  
Please do sign the Visitors' Book before you leave.**

Sunday Worship is held at 10:30am and 6:00pm weekly.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is observed at the morning service on the third Sunday of each month and at the evening service on the first Sunday of each month.

Why not come and join us?

We have various weekly children and youth activities:

Tuesday	Beaver Scouts 6:00pm to 7:15pm, Scouts to 9:15pm
Wednesday	Brownies 6:00pm to 7:00pm, Guides 7:00pm to 9:15pm
Thursday	Beavers 6:00pm to 7:15pm
Friday	Rainbows 6:00pm to 7:00pm

We can also cater for special events such as Weddings, Baptisms, and Funerals.

### **Salem Wesleyan Reform Church**

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