

Sunday Services take place at 11am and usually last for about an hour. Occasionally we have services at other times

Our services are usually 'traditional Methodist' (see inside to find out what that means!) and there is no restriction on who can come - just turn up in time for the start of the service.

See the notice board by our front door each week to find out who the preacher is.

We also have a Housegroup that meets in members' houses to share and learn about our faith.

At the moment we do not have an active Sunday School, but with a day or two's notice we can provide suitable activities. Or we are happy for them to stay in the main service with you.

Monday

9.30-11.30am *Happy Tots* Toddler Group

Tuesday

3 - 7.30pm Hildale School of Dancing †
8pm Wesley Guild (Oct - Apr)

Wednesday

10-11 am Mid-week service (open to everybody)

Thursday

9.30 - 10.30am *Music Dreams* (for 0-2 year-olds) †
3.45 - 7.30pm Hildale School of Dancing †
7.30 - 9.30pm Table Tennis group

Friday

9.30- 11.30am Friday Breakfast for carers and young children with the option of a hot breakfast.

9..30 - 10.30am *Didi Dance* †

Saturday

9am - 1.45pm Hildale School of Dancing †

† The meetings marked are private hirings. You can just turn up at the time and ask the organiser, or we can provide you with a contact number.

If you would like to use our building to hold children's parties, meetings, etc, outside the above times contact us on 01702 544252 to find our very reasonable rates, but please be aware that NO alcohol or gambling is allowed on the premises.

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This QR code links directly to our website where you can get up-to-date information

Introducing . . .

Rochford Methodist Church



The **Methodist Church** 

We are Rochford Methodist Church.

We are a traditional Methodist Church but with a modern attitude towards worship. We really are friendly and welcoming, especially to those who do not attend a church regularly. If you do not go to a church at all and want to start, why not start your journey in the Christian faith with us?

Methodists have been in Rochford since 1822, and we have been in our current building since 1881. If you have been living in Rochford since 1971, you would have seen a series of changes to our buildings which has resulted in a modern flexible building.

Our collaboration with Community Church Rochford has resulted in a wide range of activities for the community and you are welcome to come along to enjoy them .

A sample list of meetings can be found on the back page and you and your family are more than welcome to come and join in any of them.

What can you expect at a service?

Many people do not have a clear idea about what happens at a service. Here are a few questions we have been asked.

Is the Methodist Church a Christian church?

Most definitely. Just over 225 years ago, the 'Wesleyans' broke away from the Church of England, but it still follows Christian principles. Our normal Sunday services do not rigidly follow a laid-down pattern, except when we celebrate Holy Communion.

Do I have to be a member to come to a service?

Not at all. Anybody at all can come to a service to worship. If you decide you like us, then you can become a member if you wish, but we won't force you.

Why do you sing so many hymns?

Methodism was 'born in song,' as the saying goes. During most of a service you will be listening, but singing a hymn allows you to properly take part. If you sing a hymn as if it means something to you, it will be your chance to express your own personal faith.

But I can't sing

Nor can many of us - think of it as group karaoke!

So many books, how do I know which one to use?

One of the books will be the Bible and we use a version called *The Good News Translation*. The Bible is the basis of the faith of all Christian churches.

We sing hymns from three books - the thicker dark blue book is *Hymns and Psalms* the thinner light blue one is *Songs of Fellowship* and the red one is *Singing the Faith*. The list on the board at the front of the church will tell you which one to use, and the preacher will announce them. [Hint: immediately after we have sung a hymn, look up the next one and open the book so you don't have to do it in a hurry when it is announced.]

In any case, we usually project the words of hymns and bible readings so if you don't want to use a book then you don't have to.

For special services, like Communion Services, we also hand out a book of services and this guides us.

How will I know when to stand or sit?

Unless there are any other instructions, we stand when we sing hymns, when the collection is being taken forward, and after the last hymn (while we finish with a short prayer), and we sit for everything else. Do what everyone else does and you can't go far wrong.

Collection? What's that?

Contrary to common belief, all churches are responsible for raising their own finances, and the members usually do this by having a 'free will' collection during the service. There is no set amount, and you do not have to give if you don't want to, or if there are reasons why you can't - we won't ask why. All the money we raise helps to pay for maintaining our premises and financing our work in the community. We rely heavily on volunteers who receive no payment.

What do I have to wear?

Whatever you like.

Some people like to wear formal clothes, others prefer casual - it is the person inside that matters.

Oh, and women don't wear hats these days!

I'm not good enough to go to church

Everybody is good enough to go to church. Christians don't think of themselves as 'perfect', but they recognise they could be better. The only person we recognise as being 'perfect' was Jesus Christ, who we believe was the son of God. It is his teachings (found in the Bible) that we listen to and learn from. The word *Christian* means 'follower of Christ'.

I would be embarrassed to arrive early, could I come after the service starts and just slip in at the back?

You could try, but churches tend to fill up from the back, so if you arrive late you are likely to find you would have to walk through the congregation to find a seat. It's better to turn up about ten minutes before the service starts.

Anything else?

At Rochford Methodist Church we actually start about five minutes earlier than the official start time. We have a short time of calm in which we prepare our minds for worship.

Can I take Communion?

When we have a Communion service everybody can go forward to receive the bread and wine. Unlike other churches, you do not need to have been 'confirmed' or even baptised. You don't even have to be a member of a Methodist Church.

Why don't you have the same preacher every week?

Ever since Methodism was founded, it has depended on lay people (people who are not ministers) to lead services. Amongst other things, this allows the minister to serve several churches in this area. You can find the name of our next Sunday's preacher on the notice board by the front door.