



NETWORK



Cullompton Baptist Church Magazine for Sept - Oct 2025

Minister: Rev. Glen Graham - -- *Email:* revglengraham@aol.com

Tel: 07780 700 247

Church Address: Cullompton Baptist Church, 25 High St, Cullompton EX15 1AB

Church Email: cullomptonbaptists@gmail.com

CONTENTS

APOLOGIES, WELCOME & NOTICES 2-4

- Including: Dates for Your Diary

CHURCH NEWS 5-7

- Including: Upcoming Baptism
- Baptism & Membership Classes
- All About Church Membership

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS 8-9

ALL ABOUT SUNDAY SCHOOL 10-12

HOUSE GROUPS & UPCOMING SERVICE DATES13-14

ANAGRAMS14

CBC History – Chapter 6: Sunday School and Youth Activities15-21

AND FINALLY 22-23

APOLOGIES, WELCOME & NOTICES

Dear Everyone,

Apologies to everyone that this September issue of the Network is so late. This has been down to several issues that I won't bore you with. As a consequence of this, this issue will include October too!

I hope you all have had a wonderful summer. If you want to share your summer with the *Network* readers, then please feel free.

Something exciting has happened in recent weeks, we have a newborn baby in our church fellowship. Congratulations & every blessing to the immediate family on the arrival of their beautiful baby boy.

Gana tradition dictates that babies don't get seen by the wider family & community until the official "outdooring."

To be sure that I understood correctly, I asked Google & this is how their AI explains it: "An outdooring is a traditional naming and welcoming ceremony for a newborn baby in Ghana and other African countries ... The ceremony involves officially giving the baby a name, introducing them to the community and the spiritual world, and bestowing blessings for health and happiness. It is a significant cultural event that provides the child with an identity and integrates them into the family and society."

Listen out at the notices in church for more on this.

God Bless

Rowan

Dates For Your Diaries:

Being rescheduled from 15th September 2025	The Manse	‘The Way Ahead’ group meeting.
Thursday, 2nd October @ 10:30am	The Manse	Deacons’ Meeting
Sunday, 5th October 2025 from 10:30 am	The Sanctuary & School Room	Our Harvest Service, followed by Lunch
30th October 2025 @ 7pm	The School Room	Church Fellowship Meeting (all are welcome)

The Next Network

The deadline for dates to go in the November 2025 *Network* will be **Monday, 27th October** & the magazine will be released around the **1st November**.

IMPORTANT: There has been, for some time, a problem with the Manse’s land line. Therefore, if you need to contact Glen, then please ring his mobile telephone number: **07780 700247**. If you can’t get hold of him on his mobile & it is urgent, then please ring Rowan’s: **07766 313 400**.

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The Next Church Fellowship Meeting Will Be On



30th October 2025

@ 10:30am

In the School Room

All are welcome to attend

CHURCH NEWS



On **Saturday 11 October 2025** is the date of Cullompton's *Autumn Festival*. Our Church's *Way Ahead* team have decided to not take part in the event this year. Instead, we have decided to focus all our efforts into the *Christmas Festival* on **Saturday 29th November 2025**. Our church efforts for this were much appreciated last year.

Baptism

We are excited to announce that someone from our church family wishes to be baptised. Please watch this space.

Baptism & Membership Classes

As well as a request to be baptised, others are interested in becoming church members. If you are interested in either of these things, then:

Please speak to **Rev. Glen** or

Email: cullomptonbaptists@gmail.com

to find out more by **29th September**, thank you!

All About Church Membership

It is exciting to know that one person has asked for Baptism as a believer and two more want to become members of our Church. Here is a

reminder what these important things are all about in a Question-and-answer style.

Q. Where does Church membership appear in the Bible?

A. Although there is no one specific command to go through a membership process, it is implied in the fact that the early Church formed herself into local congregations.

They went through classes in how to be a fruitful disciple. Each local congregation met together to discuss the direction of travel and enjoy worship and fellowship with God and fellow believers.

Q. So I come to Church, why formally become a member?

A. In Baptist Churches, the members are the ones under God who decide how the Church is run and with help from the Minister shape the vision and direction of the Church.

The decision-making body must be made up of believers only. As members, we formally commit ourselves to our local Church. Such commitment is expressed in prayer, service and giving.

We also commit to walk together and watch over one another. This is something Baptists have prized since our beginnings.

Q. Why get Baptised as a believer?

A. Jesus commanded it as a mark of entry into the Kingdom of God. The rest of the New Testament both affirms and practises it as part of our commitment to following Jesus.

This article will not answer all your questions, but I hope it whets your appetite for the classes to come. Hope to see some of you in October.



CHURCH LUNCH

We are having a church lunch of various soups & desserts.

on Sunday, 5th October 2025.

This will follow our Harvest service & take place after our regular tea and coffee.

All are welcome!

PASTOR'S PONDERING'S

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

"Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted."

Hebrews 12:1-3

September is here and a new Church year is upon us.

After the restfulness of the Summer, we re-group and dive into a new season of learning and activities.

On Sunday mornings we are spending time in the much-neglected book of **Joshua**.

In our home groups, we are starting a series called "*Lives made new*", studying **Romans chapters 5 to 8**. These chapters explain the new life Jesus gives us when we become his.

The verses at the top of the article show us how we can have a fresh start every day by:

1. First, repent of sins.
2. Get rid of bad habits and replace them with good ones like prayer and bible study.
3. Fix your eyes on Jesus and follow his example.
4. Finally, keep running the Christian race and allow others to cheer you on.

This pattern helps us have a good daily walk with the Lord.

Others have expressed a fresh start by wanting to join a class exploring Church membership and baptism.

This will include:

1. What does it mean to be a Christian?
2. How do I maintain my Christian life?
3. What is Believers' Baptism and why does being a believer matter when it comes to Baptism?
4. What is the Church and where do I fit?

If you want to be a Church Member or explore believers' Baptism, please let me know by **the 29th September**. I will then contact the group to arrange when we will meet.

To close, I want to remind you of our Harvest celebrations.

The service will now be on 5 October followed by soup and puddings.

The offering will go to *Operation Agri* and the food offerings are going to *People Matter Cullompton*.

Lord, we give ourselves once again to you. Help us to follow you faithfully and serve you willing.

May your presence guide, protect and keep us, now and forever.

Amen

Yours in Christ.

Rev. Glen Graham.



Throughout the summer the children have been looking at 'The Parables'. We always try and make the Summer and other holiday lessons fun, while also never losing sight of why we are in Sunday School.

During the academic year we loosely follow the 'Go Teach' Syllabus.

<https://www.goteach.org.uk/> -

"Go Teach Publications Ltd. is a UK-based Registered Charity, which publishes Bible teaching material for use with children and young people aged from 3 to 14 years."



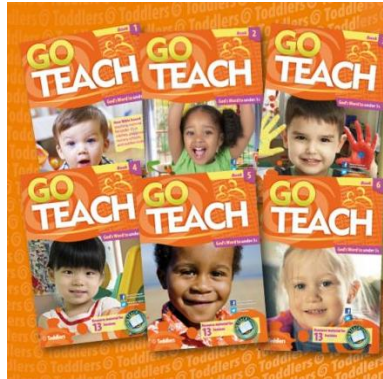
We have been using their teaching frame for the last 11 years. We find it ideal within our small Sunday School setting. Each child gets their own puzzle book aimed at their age & ability. Yet they can all study the same lesson together, with different pieces in that lesson aimed at the different ages. It means that we don't need to find different teachers for different groups.

They provide material for:

- **3-4's (Beginners)**

- 5-7's (Primaries)
- 8-11's (Juniors) &
- 12-14's (Young Teens)

They also provide a series of Toddler Teaching books



The CBC Sunday School leaders don't always like the proposed teaching style, so on those occasions we will do our own thing based on the *Go Teach* lesson. However, we do really like the fact that the *Go Teach* teaching programme is a four-year-cycle, covering the core of the bible & this gives the children a grasp of where everything fits.

They say on their website that "The syllabus is designed to:

- cover all appropriate major Bible characters, events, and teaching;
- give all ages the same topics, most of the time;
- give some OT and some NT lessons in each issue;
- give some lessons from the Gospels in each issue;
- teach the OT and Acts chronologically;
- cover the Gospels in mainly chronological stages.

"All age ranges follow the same teaching topics, with one or two exceptions for the younger groups.

Go Teach's Aims:

“Our purpose is to glorify God by advancing the Christian faith through the production of Bible teaching material for use with children and young people.

“Whilst taking into account what is suitable for each age group, the teaching material is based on a syllabus designed to:

- teach fundamental Bible truth;
- give a basic framework of Bible history;
- teach the main events of the life and work of Christ;
- introduce the Bible's other main characters and events.

“The aim of the published Bible lessons are to:

- lay a foundation of Bible knowledge;
- apply Bible truth to the lives of children and young people;
- present the challenge of the gospel encourage obedience to God's word.

The cycle is at book 10 and in the coming weeks our children will be studying:

<i>Lesson</i>	<i>Bible Study Title</i>	<i>Lesson Title</i>	<i>Passage</i>
1	Elijah (1 Kings)	Elijah: Fed by ravens	1 Kings 17
2		On Mount Carmel	1 Kings 18
3		At Horeb	1 Kings 19:1–18

4		Calling Elisha	1 Kings 19:15–21; 2 Kings 2:1–22
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HOME GROUPS

These will normally be held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month. **N.B.** The *Evening Group* sometimes meets at other times. These extra times will be announced in church & on the *Whats App* group.

Next dates as follows:

23rd September 2025
(10:30 am & 7pm)

14th October 2025
(10:30 am & 7pm)

28th October 2025
(10:30 am & 7pm)

N.B. You are very welcome to attend either/or both
AM or PM groups.

For location information please email:
cullomptonbaptists@gmail.com

UPCOMING SERVICES

Sunday, 14th September @ 10:30am	Normal Sunday Worship	Led by: Rev. Glen Graham
Sunday, 21st September @ 10:30am	Communion Service	Led by: Rev. Glen Graham
Sunday, 28th September @ 10:30am	Normal Sunday Worship	Led by: Rev. Glen Graham
Sunday, 5th October @ 10:30am	Normal Sunday Worship	Led by: Rev. Glen Graham
Sunday, 12th October @ 10:30am	Normal Sunday Worship	Led by: Rev. Glen Graham
Sunday, 19th October @ 10:30am	Communion Service	Led by: Rev. Glen Graham
Sunday, 26th October @ 10:30am	Normal Sunday Worship	Led by: Noel Morgan
Sunday, 2nd November @ 10:30am	Normal Sunday Worship	Led by: Rev. Glen Graham

ANAGRAHMS

	<i>Puzzle</i>	<i>Clue</i>
	Nailed	A book of the bible
	Buries It	Roman Emperor during Jesus' lifetime
	A Shoe	Minor Prophet, married Gomer

Cullompton Baptist Church History

© Gareth Shaw

Chapter 6 - The Sunday School and Youth Activities

The first record of our Sunday school is from a minute book of 1856, when the ' teachers of the Sabbath School ' agreed to observe a set of rules . At the meeting were some 15 teachers, including the superintendent John Pidgeon. From this we can draw a number of important facts. First the church must have had a well established Sunday school by this time given that there were so many teachers and although we can not date our beginnings we do know that Tiverton Baptist church had a formal Sunday school by 1809. Second we can also deduce from having 15 teachers that there must have been a large number of pupils in 1856. Of course at this time education for most people was limited as there was no state provision. As a consequence attendance at Sunday school was considered important by many families.

Victorian society was heavily regulated and controlled and rules were important not only in society but also within our church. The Sunday school imposed rules on the teachers and the pupils. In 1856 there were 19 rules for the pupils to observe. These included; ' Any child being absent five times during the quarter without giving a satisfactory statement for doing so cannot be permitted to remain in the School'. Also that all children ' should return to their homes when dismissed and not remain in the streets profaning the Sabbath'. As well as punishments there were rewards for those children who regularly attended. They were given a ticket, and when twenty had been collected in a quarter they were entitled to a book. The scholars were

instructed in bible study and by 1879 consideration was given to whether any of them should compete in the Exeter Sunday School Union 'Industrial Exhibition'. During this time of the Sunday school there was a considerable expansion in the number of people attending and this was in no small part to the great work of John Pidgeon the superintendent of whom we know very little. He was obviously an educated man and was a miller living and working at the lower mill in the town.

The children were also treated to parties (so called winter and summer treats), the first recorded being in August 1879, when the pupils met in the schoolroom at 4pm. This was to become an annual event that was eagerly awaited by children who probably never had any real holidays. The early outings were local and continued to be so until the early twentieth century as for example, in July 1915 when 'the teachers and scholars met in the schoolroom at 3pm to form up and march to the field kindly lent by Mr Lawrence, tea was provided and various games were played until 9pm when they marched back to the Bull Ring, having sung a hymn'. The minute book tells us that after 'prayer we all went home feeling that we had a happy and enjoyable time'. The 'Great War' not only limited the summer excursions but also brought personal tragedy to the Sunday school. In September 1917 Percy Labdon, 'was killed in action'. Before the war he 'was an earnest and consistent teacher'.

After the war the summer outings started to go to the seaside and for many children this was their one visit to the coast even though it was relatively close by. A popular destination was Teignmouth which the Sunday school visited in 1919 and 'a most enjoyable time was spent ' with tea being provided ' on the pier at 5.30 and all did justice to it'.

These outings were usually joint with the Wesleyans and always by train. The last act was at Cullompton station where the 'scholars formed up before parting and thanked the station master for the excellent arrangement of the railway service'. These treats or outings continue to-day and in recent years the summer ones have often gone to Forest Glade at the kind invitation of Freda and Norman Wellard.

The other important annual event in the life of the Sunday school was the anniversary service. We are told by the minute book for 1915-1937 that, 'one of the most successful anniversary services was held in May 1922 when the Rev Scroggie was the preacher, and his address and sermon was much appreciated'. The 'attendance at each was good, the chapel being full morning and afternoon, and in the evening it was packed, every available bit of room was taken up'. At this time and right up until the 1960s a Sunday school was held in the afternoon and classes were divided by age and by sex for the older pupils. The numbers attending were impressive averaging 100 for much of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. With this vast number of people many things were possible. The Sunday school for example raised considerable amounts of money for the church and charitable organisations. By the 1920s sales of work became regular events as in 1924 when the following stalls were arranged:

Jumble stall -Mrs Nichols Household Stall - Mrs B. Labdon and Miss H. Discombe Sweets and cakes- Miss Soul and Miss Paul Fancy goods- Mrs F.Labdon and Miss A. Labdon Mens goods- Mr E. A. Batten Bran pie Miss D. Fare Tea -men teachers

The entry charge was 3 old pence and the sale was deemed a great success as it raised over £30 to buy bibles and hymn books for the Sunday school.

Progress for the pupils in bible study was a serious and an important part of their training with scholars being examined to gain certificates from the Sunday School Union. Part of this organisation visited Cullompton in 1927 and made various suggestions to improve the Sunday school. These included 'that classrooms be made more attractive in the way of colouring and table cloths on the tables'. This was also a period of changing educational ideas since in 1928 a conference was held by the Exeter and District Sunday School Union on the 'teaching of temperance and the League of Nations principles'. Charles Raven the school superintendent addressed the Cullompton teachers and urged the need for change. This in part was a plan brought in by Mrs Ives, the minister's wife. It seems to have mainly consisted of a reorganisation of the classes by age. By 1930 further improvements were being urged by the Exeter Union, who argued that 'primary classes should have more ventilation, a carpet for the floor and also something for the legs of the chairs'. Clearly interest had now turned to improving the environment for the small children.

One of the biggest blows to the Sunday school was the death of its superintendent of 27 years, Charles Raven, in 1932. He was a local boot maker who lived in Lower Street and had dedicated his life to service in the church. At his memorial service the scholars were encouraged to give their hearts to Jesus and to serve him whilst they were young, 'for it was at a young age that Charles Raven had accepted Christ as his Saviour'. A memorial tablet is to be found to Charles Raven, appropriately placed in the schoolroom. The attempt to find a worthy

successor was a time of much reflection for over a month, after which the post was offered to Mr F. Gunn , who accepted for a 12 month period but in fact held the position until 1937.

The Second World War brought great hardships to both scholars and teachers. But their sufferings were minor compared with those enduring the bombing in London. In answer to an appeal from the London Baptist Sunday School Union a gift of £1 15s and 6d was sent in March 1941. The dark days of the war restricted activities and the Christmas treats had to be held in the day school as the schoolrooms were being used for other purposes (see Chapter 3). At this time Mr E. A. Batten was playing an increasingly important role and by 1944 he had accepted the job of superintendent 'until such time that a new minister was appointed.

At the end of the war the Sunday school had nine teachers with classes meeting in the morning and afternoon. This was also a time when thoughts were being given to how to provide more activities for the older children, especially the girls, during the week days. The Rev Sterry expressed ' his deep concern over losing them from the Sunday school and from our Fellowship'. Gladys Drewe kindly offered to arrange activities for the older girls although what happened is not recorded in the minute book , we can have no doubt that Miss Drewe would have made a positive contribution. Her commitment to the church and Sunday school was strong and she was still teaching children over 40 years later, and in total she worked for 62 years as a Sunday school teacher.

During the late 1950s the minister raised the issue of adopting new methods of teaching to reflect what was happening in the day schools,

concern was also raised over the shortage of teachers. and it was proposed that Norman Lindsell and Paul Lambert be asked to help out.

Unfortunately, problems persisted and numbers dwindled further, it was also reported in 1959 that ' unruly children were becoming a difficulty'. To combat this children were put on a months trial in a curious throwback to the Victorian period. By 1962 other drastic measures were taken as the Sunday school was moved to the morning service. The minute book reports that , ' there were mixed feelings about this, but it was felt that the time has come when changes are necessary , as numbers are considerably down'. The afternoon classes were kept but most children came in the morning.

The 1960s were clearly a period of change both in the scale and nature of the Sunday school's activities. For those young people within the church they were exciting times as youth activities were being developed, mirroring the wider changes in society. In 1965 our church entered two teams in the Exeter Scripture Union competition, and both won. Until recent times the cup they won was kept in a glass case at the front of the church. At a church meeting in October 1967 Mr Edwards asked if the Schoolroom could be used for a youth club and the primary room as a coffee bar. This was agreed and the church had its own coffee bar for young people, often meeting on a Friday. It was the idea of the church's teenagers themselves to start this as a process of outreach. The club was called the 'Pink Piranha' and a sponsored walk paid for the furniture and coffee bar. It caught on quickly attracting a curious mixture of school friends and the local leather bikers. The church was very tolerant of this invasion by sometimes up to a hundred teenagers, who just wanted to meet drink coke or coffee and chat against a background of loud music This seems to have lasted about two years

before those who started it went away to University and it ended as quickly as it had begun. This period was also the start of an increasing participation of young people in the main morning services. Ken Edwards encouraged this and was over the years the author of numerous Sunday school plays , all of which were received with great interest by the congregation and acted with considerable enthusiasm by the children.

Of equal importance was the start of a wider youth outreach with the establishment of the summer holiday club. This was originally run by visiting students to Cullompton . Their first visit was of 20 students in August 1967, this became a joint venture between all the churches in Cullompton and continued into the mid 1990s providing welcome entertainment and fellowship for hundreds of the town's children over the years. It became a regular event each August and I know of at least two children within our church who refused to go away on holiday when the holiday club was meeting.

Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s various youth clubs and groups have been formed, including 'Club 64' and the 'Pink Flamingo'. All have been good fun and attracted interest but most have been short lived and served the needs of one specific group of teenagers within the church. In contrast the Sunday school has provided a more consistent contribution to church life and we have been fortunate in always having willing teachers. Some have served for many years such as Gladys Davis who has worked as a Sunday School teacher for 55 Years.

Serving God and the Community; a history of Cullompton Baptist Church 1700-2000

© Gareth Shaw

Come back next month for Chapter 7 - The Sunshine Hour and Other Women's Organisations.

Proceeds from the sale of this book (published circa 2000) were given to the Church Building Fund.

AND FINALLY

Please email all enquiries to:
cullomptonbaptists@gmail.com

A gentle reminder that smoking is prohibited on the church premises. This includes leaving cigarette butts in church bins.

Thank you.




Sermons On YouTube:

A *2025 Sermon archive* is gradually growing & can be found at:

https://www.youtube.com/@cullompton_baptistchurch3193

Each video will contain that week's reading, the sermon & previews of the hymns/worship songs sung during the service (YouTube will generate direct links to where you can hear versions of the whole musical pieces).

The church has a 'WhatsApp' group.  Please speak to **Bianca** if you would like to be added to it or email the church

We are now on Social Media!



Facebook Instagram X

To follow us on any of the platforms
above search our name
Cullompton Baptist Church

Our Mission is to:

- Bring others to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour
- Deepen our knowledge of God through worship and Bible teaching
- Lovingly support each other through fellowship
- Encourage each other in practical Christianity

So that we may reach our full spiritual potential through His spirit living in us.

