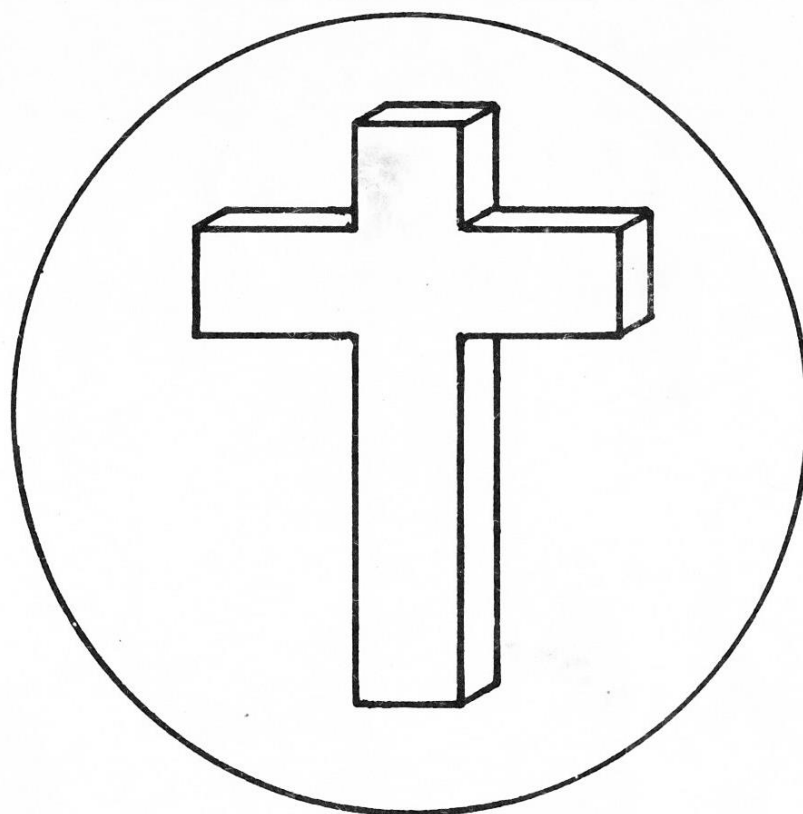


1929



1979

Becontree Avenue

Baptist Church

50th Anniversary

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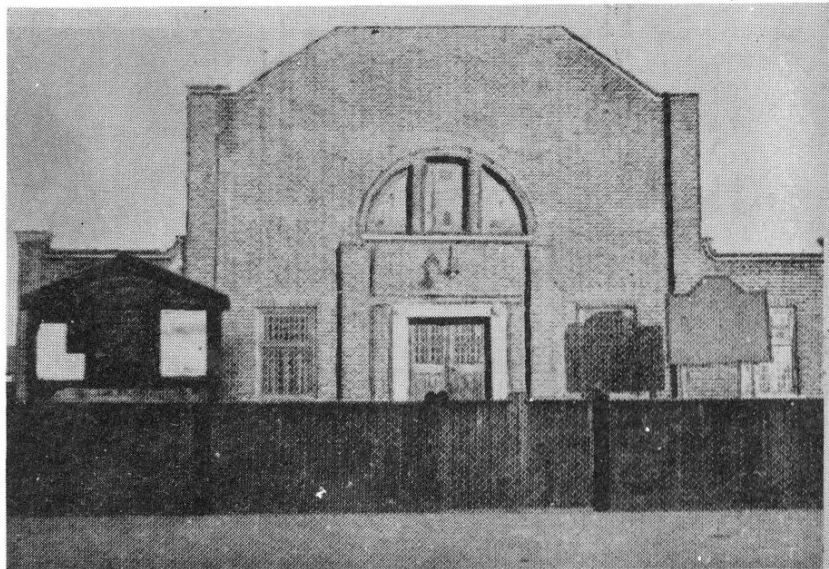
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OUR CHURCH

As it started



And then



And now



A MESSAGE FROM OUR MINISTER

Becontree Avenue Baptist Church.

On the occasion of our
50th Anniversary Celebration

Message from the Minister:

Oh, how faithful the Lord is.

As one looks back down the years, one rejoices in the fact that God has been constant in truth, in love and in faithfulness — inspiring the beginnings of His work in Becontree — strengthening His cause — and sustaining His servants. Our first thought therefore, is one of PRAISE and THANKSGIVING to our Almighty and unchanging God.

We then, are thankful to those, who having received the call of God, have faithfully and responsibly forwarded the Lord's Mission in this area. People of firm conviction, resolute faith, untiring service, and all to the Glory of God. Our second thought therefore, is one of thanksgiving for those who have served faithfully and well.

And the work continues, and is prospering as we face the challenges of this new age, under the guidance and blessing of our Sovereign Lord Jesus.

If we are to be true to Scripture Teaching, then in our JUBILEE YEAR we are to learn and experience THREE THINGS in the life our fellowship:

- (i) To learn the art of true spiritual rest.
(Lev 25) (Mark 6:3) (Isaiah 26:3) (Isaiah 40:31) (Matt 11:28—30)
- (ii) To allow worship to become true celebration and rejoicing.
(Lev 25:10—17) (Psalm 84) (Psalm 96) (Acts 2:43:47)
- (iii) To pray for and expect Spiritual Renewal.
(Acts 1:8) (Acts 2:1, 38—47) (Acts 4:20, 29—33) (Malachi 3:10)

We therefore turn from the past FIFTY YEARS to look to the future with every confidence in our Lord. As we do so, let us re-dedicate ourselves to the task of 'bringing in the Kingdom'.

'To serve the present age
My calling to fulfil;
O may it all my powers engage
To do my Master's Will.'



A GLANCE BACKWARD

It would be impossible within the confines of this booklet to properly record fifty years of history, but it is right at this time to take a glance back in order to see how we have progressed. If ever a Church was built upon prayer this is a prime example.

The Church started in a room over the top of a fried fish and chip shop, which was known then as 'The Upper Room'. It was as two men, namely William Andrews and William Bowler were returning home from worship one Sunday morning that this Church began. They resolved then that the opening of a Baptist Church in Becontree Avenue should be with them a matter of urgent prayer.

Their prayers were heard and a brand new Church opened for worship at Easter, 1929, it had cost nearly £3,800, the story of how the money was raised in gifts and loans is fascinating but too long to be told here. Suffice it to say that hard as it was to raise the money, it was an even longer task to repay it all, but, with a lot of prayer and faith in God the Church worked to repay their debt. In 1944 the final debt was cleared, when we consider that as late as 1942 the average weekly offerings totalled £3-6-0d the size of the task can be seen. Special prayer meetings were held over the years, Quarter-days came and went, faced with trepidation but always the bills were met. There is no doubting the fact that this Church was founded upon prayer.

Wilfred Driskell, the first minister of our Church came straight from Spurgeon's College, he confided long afterward that he had been especially warned not to take up work in the 'difficult' town of Dagenham. Fortunately for us and indeed for himself, he resisted the temptation, and served the Cause of God's Kingdom faithfully and well in this place for ten years, leaving behind him a tradition and a reputation of a Ministry Blessed of God.

Pastor George Mager took over and steered our Church on through the difficult war years, the Church was damaged by bomb-blast, people were evacuated away, but the witness and work of this Church stood firm, surrounded and supported by prayer.

At the end of 1946 the Reverend J. Cooper became Minister of our Church and led the Church through to its 'coming-of-age' in May 1950. There was good cause for celebration, the Church had grown and prospered in every way due to the unstinting work of the Ministers and congregation in forwarding God's work in the area. The Reverend Cooper left us at the end of 1950 and the Church had to manage without a minister until the Reverend D. Allingham took over at the end of 1951 but only served until August 1954 and once more the Church had to rely upon Lay-Preachers and Visiting Ministers until the Reverend E. Collinson accepted the Pastorate in February 1956 and remained with us until December 1959.

Again the Church went through a period without a Minister but, because it was grounded upon prayer and soundly established it continued to witness in the area. Although the Church was not to have a Minister until September 1961 discussions were commenced in March 1960 to establish the 'Dagenham Scheme' of Churches whereby our Church would link with Oxlow Lane and Chaplin Road and this came into being in 1961. At the same time discussions were under way for a new Church Building and a Building fund was launched, the Becontree Avenue Baptist Church showed every intention of being here to stay, not only to stay but to grow!!

The arrival of the Reverend J.J. Brown to our Church in September 1961 heralded a period of continuous Ministerial oversight which has continued right up to date, and, as a result the Church has moved steadily onward in its work and witness.

At a Church Meeting held on the 26th September, 1962, it was proposed and accepted that a new Church building be built and once more the faith of the Church members was stretched as they committed themselves to a cost of over £19,000, but God honoured their faith and in 1977 the last of the repayments was made. Work on the next building went ahead and the doors were opened for worship on the 17th October, 1964. The opening service was led by the Reverend Brown and so many people attended that the old and new Church buildings were filled to capacity with the service being replayed to the old building by close-circuit television.

The same year Wood Lane Baptist Church applied to join the 'Dagenham Scheme' and was accepted, its combined work and witness of the scheme has continued ever since.

In October 1969 the Reverend J.J. Brown moved to take up the pastorate of Chaplin Road at the same time the Reverend J. Buckley came to our Church and in 1977 became the Senior Minister of the group. The Church has continued to grow in size and spiritual maturity under his leadership and it is our prayer that it will continue to do so.

People have and gone, as have the Ministers, but this Church has affected many lives in its first fifty years. Just as the Church was founded upon prayer so it is the prayer of the Church that the next fifty years will bring forth much fruit from the vine as the work of witness for God continues.

BECONTREE AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH

GOLDEN JUBILEE

PROGRAMME OF ANNIVERSARY EVENTS 1979

JANUARY

- Saturday 27th SONGS BY 'PSALM 151'
THE YOUTH CHOIR PRESENTS —
'CAPTAIN NOAH AND HIS FLOATING ZOO'
- Sunday 28th SERVICES LED BY THE REVEREND
RODNEY McCANN

FEBRUARY

- Sunday 11th MORNING AND EVENING SERVICES LED BY
THE BRIGADES
- Saturday 24th CHURCH FAMILY PARTY
- Sunday 25th SERVICES LED BY FAMILIES OF OUR
FELLOWSHIP

MARCH

- Saturday 24th UNITED CHURCH CONFERENCE
- Sunday 25th MOTHERING AND FAMILY FESTIVAL SUNDAY

APRIL

- Saturday 7th OUTING TO THE LONDON EMMANUEL CHOIR
SPRING FESTIVAL
- Sunday 21st SENIOR CITIZEN'S PARTY
- Sunday 22nd LADIES' ANNIVERSARY SUNDAY
- Tuesday 24th LADIES' ANNIVERSARY RALLY

MAY — CELEBRATION WEEKEND

- Saturday 12th TEA FOLLOWED BY A SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING
- Sunday 13th MORNING AND EVENING SERVICES LED BY THE
REVEREND DOUGLAS HICKS AT 11 a.m. & 6.30 p.m.
4 p.m. A MARCH OF WITNESS
5 p.m. BUFFET TEA
8 p.m. FILM SLIDES OF THE YEARS

WHAT DOES OUR PRESENT WORK FOR JESUS CONSIST OF?

- The Church*
- Services on Sundays at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.
 - Mid-week prayer and bible study meeting — Wednesday at 8 p.m.
 - Alternate Fridays — praise meeting at 8 p.m.
 - Monthly prayer meeting — house group
 - Hospital services
 - Hospital visitation
- Our Youth*
- Alternate Fridays — junior and senior youth group fellowships commence at 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. respectively.
- Boys Brigade*
- Tuesday — Anchor Boys 5.30 to 7.00 p.m.
 - Thursday — 7.00 to 9.30 p.m.
- Girls Brigade*
- Monday — Explorers 5.30 to 7.00 p.m.
Company 7.00 to 9.30 p.m.
 - Thursday — 5.00 to 8.30 p.m.
- Junior Church*
- Primary, junior and bible classes meet on Sundays 11.00 to 12.00 a.m.
- Ladies Meeting*
- Every Tuesday afternoon at 3 p.m.

For personal notes