

**'O magnify  
the Lord  
with me,  
and let us exalt  
his name  
together'**

Psalm 34 verse 3

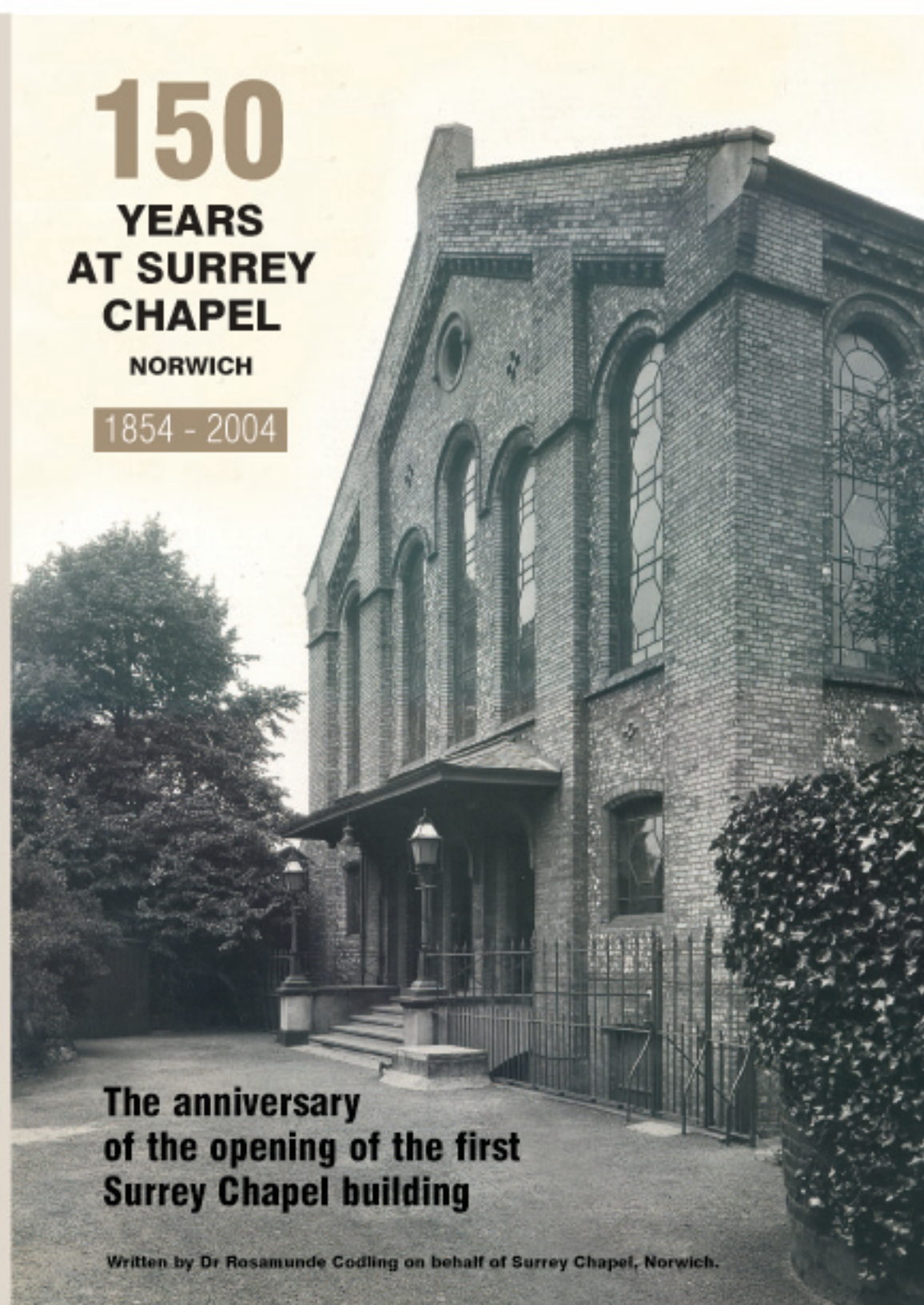
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**150**  
**YEARS**  
**AT SURREY**  
**CHAPEL**  
**NORWICH**

1854 - 2004

**The anniversary  
of the opening of the first  
Surrey Chapel building**

Written by Dr Rosamunde Codling on behalf of Surrey Chapel, Norwich.



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## INTRODUCTION

In 1854 a *Book of Remembrance* was published to celebrate the centenary of the opening of the building in Norwich that became known as Surrey Chapel. The reasons for the publication were simply stated in the opening paragraph:

*The aim of the narrative is not to exalt men, nor the church - grateful to God though we are for the history of both - but to render our humble and hearty thanks to His Name who in His wisdom and love chose and called out those who for so many years ministered at Surrey Chapel.*

*'O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together'*  
Psalm 34 verse 3.

In 2004, we echo this hope. Much of the text and pictures in the earlier *Book of Remembrance* are reproduced here. There have been a further 50 years of church life that are recorded, even if only in outline. There is also the opportunity to enlarge on some aspects of the early years of the church, and perhaps set it more firmly in the wider context of Norwich in the middle of the 19th century.

We are taking the opportunity to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the opening of the first purpose-built Surrey Chapel. Over the years that cover the history of this particular church, names have changed and buildings have been demolished, which has sometimes caused confusion. The original congregation under the ministry of



Robert Govett began in 1844, and was called the Bazaar Chapel after the name of the rented hall in which they met. They outgrew this accommodation and a new building, originally known as Ebenezer Chapel, Surrey Road, was opened in 1854. The *Book of Remembrance* was written to commemorate the centenary of that occasion. Over the years, the congregation became known as Surrey Chapel, and in 1985 when the church moved to the northern side of the city, it was decided to keep that name. The present booklet is therefore written 160 years from the first meeting of the congregation and 150 years since the opening of the purpose-built Chapel.

There are good reasons to take a backwards look. It is clear that a group of Christians in 19th century Norwich was prepared to take a firm stand about matters they considered to be of great importance in their lives. They were willing to go in directions that probably surprised those around them. They were also involved in the community. Such resolve should encourage those who follow them, the Surrey Chapel family of the 21st century.



## NORWICH IN THE 19TH CENTURY

The middle years of the 19th century in Britain were a rich mix of enterprise and tradition, wealth and poverty. Queen Victoria had come to the throne in 1837, the British Empire was expanding, and the railways were being built.

The second edition of White's *History, Gazetteer and Directory of Norfolk*, published in 1845, gives a fascinating overview of both the county and the city. Many pages are given to the history of churches, both Anglican and others. A lengthy paragraph outlines the Religious Societies of Norwich, which were: 'as numerous and as liberally supported as those of most other places.' Bible Societies and missionary organisations are listed, including the City Mission Society which had been established in 1836 and was:

*... supported by all religious denominations, [allowing] yearly salaries of from £40 to £65, to six or seven missionaries, who visit the houses of the poor for the purpose of imparting religious instruction, in addition to which they are often the means of bringing seasonable relief to distressed families in times of sickness and poverty.* (White, 1845, p. 123)

It also mentioned that 'the first Sunday School in this city was established in St Stephen's parish, 1785, since which others have been attached to most of the churches and chapels' and estimated that there were 'upwards of 5000 Sunday scholars.' (White, 1845, p. 123)



The middle years of the nineteenth century saw the growth of the boot and shoe industry in Norwich. The number of employed workers more than trebled over the twenty years that saw the establishment of Surrey Chapel and the construction of its first building (Green and Young, 1968, p. 32). In the twentieth century numbers were to rise even higher so that the decision was taken to locate the headquarters of the National Union of Boot and Shoe Operatives in a purpose-built office and meeting room in the city. Only a few years later, in the 1970s, membership had declined so much that it was decided to sell the buildings. It is poignant to realise that Surrey Chapel which started at the time of the growth of the industry moved in 1985 to the building vacated by the trade union.



## ROBERT GOVETT AND THE BAZAAR CHAPEL

The *Book of Remembrance* gives an account of the 'Preparation and Foundation' of the church:

*Let us hark back to the beginning of the story. On February 14th, 1813, at Staines in Middlesex, Robert Govett was born into a well-known ecclesiastical family. With a clerical career in view he graduated at Oxford University and became a Fellow of Worcester College. (1954, p. 4)*

He was the eldest son of the vicar of Staines, and at least two of his brothers also went to Oxford University and were later ordained (Foster, 1887). Mr Govett was made a Deacon of the Church of England in May 1836. In the same year, he was appointed as a Curate in Bexley, Kent, and the following year he was ordained a Priest. It appears that he also served for two years in Somers Town, an area of north London between King's Cross and Euston (Norfolk Record Office FC 76/89). It had been the home of refugees from the French Revolution, but by the middle of the 19th century was a slum. The *Book of Remembrance* continues:

*In May 1841 he came to Norwich and assumed the Curacy of St Stephen's Church, where he attracted 'crowds*

*of the elite of Norwich' (to quote a contemporary newspaper) by his preaching and teaching. Then a doubt arose in his mind on the practice of Infant Baptism, and this led the young curate to a careful study of the whole subject of Christian Baptism in the New Testament.*

*A visit to St Mary's Baptist Chapel, where he witnessed for the first time the rite of Believers' baptism by immersion, convinced him at once of its Scriptural ordination, and a few days later he was baptized himself at St Mary's by the minister - Rev William Brock. (1954, p. 4)*

Some of Mr Govett's papers, now deposited for safe keeping in the Norfolk Record Office (NRO), give greater detail about that crucial step. There are two much corrected draft letters by him, dating from the end of January and the beginning of February 1844, expressing his concerns.

The first of these letters can be assumed to be to his vicar, the Reverend Stephen Atlay, and the second to Edward Stanley, Bishop of Norwich. Part of Mr Govett's draft to the Bishop reads:





'Being now convinced that not a few points are unscriptural in the Ch. of England service for the baptism of infants, I write to inform you that I cannot conscientiously use that service as prescribed by the prayer-book any more.'  
(NRO FC/76/89)

The Bishop was speedy in his response. In his own hand, he wrote to Robert Govett on the 2nd February 1844 (a Friday) and revoked Mr Govett's licence as Curate of St Stephen's (NRO FC 76/89). Whilst this would have prevented him from taking any further part in Anglican church activities in Norwich, it was not until 34 years later that Mr Govett formally left the Church of England. He wrote a Deed of Relinquishment to 'all rights, advantages and exemptions of the Office' which was sealed at the High Court of Justice (Chancery Division) on the 18th February 1878 (NRO FC 76/89).

He also had to relinquish his Fellowship at Worcester College, Oxford, reportedly losing an annual income of £300, as at that time the position could only be held by ordained members of the Anglican church. He had been appointed a Fellow in 1835 and resigned in 1844, the eventful year when he left St Stephen's. It has also been suggested that some financial support from his family was withdrawn. No specific details have been found, but it would appear that he continued to have some form of private income.

Although he was leaving his appointment in the established church, Robert Govett was not



Robert Govett after leaving St Stephen's

stepping out into a previously untrodden void. In 1836 George Jeckell, a curate at Wymondham Abbey, 11 miles down the London road from Norwich, had resigned his position because of his convictions about the unscriptural nature of infant baptism. He joined with others in the market town, eventually describing the gathering as undenominational, meeting 'simply as Christians' (Entry 494 Wymondham, Ede and Virgoe, 1998). No definite link has yet been found between Jeckell and Govett, but the parallels between the two deserve note.

In his letter the Bishop makes it clear that he knew Mr Govett was giving 'lectures', presumably in the building then known as the Bazaar. Built in 1831, it had been used for many activities. In January 1844, for example, a furniture sale in the Bazaar was advertised in the *Norwich Mercury*, offering not only



Interior of the Bazaar, as it was in 1841

'very fine paintings' but also 'Baker's patent mangle' and a 'two-year-old Bay Horse Pony'. A week later, the Bazaar was also the scene for Beard's Photographic Portraits: 'Taken in a few minutes, in all weathers', but this advertisement ended with the footnote: 'NB Will shortly close'. It has not been possible to ascertain whether this was because of Mr Govett's increasing use of the building.

Well-documented events in 1851 provide detailed information about Mr Govett's activities. A nationwide census took place and each church, chapel or meeting was required to complete a form so as to provide

basic information about their buildings and the numbers attending on one particular Sunday, the 30th March 1851. The submissions for Norfolk have been collated into one volume - *Religious Worship in Norfolk: the 1851 census of accommodation and attendance at worship*.

In their introduction, the authors, Ede and Virgoe (1998), give a clear and detailed picture of the background to the census and the varied responses made by different groups or denominations, before presenting the entries for the county. This census return clarifies several points. The name

St Andrew's, Broad Street. 'BAZAAR CHAPEL'. CHRISTIANS-but have no denominational name. First used as a place of Worship 1st February 1844. Separate and Entire Yes. Exclusive Yes. Sittings free 550, other None all being free.

On 30 March	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Est. no. of persons	420	135	210
Sunday scholars	39	45	
Total	459	180	210

Remarks The building was originally built for and used as a Bazaar. It is divided into two compartments - one being used for the Chapel, the other for the 'School of Design'. Signed 30th March Robert Govett, Minister, Castle Meadow, Norwich

Norwich entry number 426, *Religious Worship in Norfolk* (see reproduction, page 37)



of Bazaar Chapel was given by Mr Govett, not by others, and there seems to be no doubt that this was a distinct church, although without denomination, with Mr Govett as minister. Its beginning (a Thursday, the 1st February 1844) is precisely stated, coinciding with the week in which Mr Govett wrote to the Bishop of Norwich and received the reply that debarred him from St Stephen's.

The census headings *Exclusive and Separate and entire* relate to the status and use of the building, and the answers given by Mr Govett indicate that the church had exclusive use of one particular building. The Ordnance Survey plan for the area clearly shows the 'two compartments' mentioned by him, although by 1885, the date of publication of the map, the smaller

space was used as a 'Model School' rather than a 'School of Design'. Not all the churches completing the forms gave numbers attending, even though this omission would seem to nullify the whole point of the census.

To the east of Bazaar Chapel stood St Andrew's Church, but their census return is sparse with no attendance numbers. The return for Bazaar Chapel showed highest numbers for the morning service, but still commendable figures for both the afternoon and evening.

Documents in the Norfolk Record Office (FC 78/69) show that the congregation did not only meet for worship, but also helped the local community. There is a list 'Expenses of the Supper given at The Bazaar, 7th March 1849' and a menu card for another meal for 50 at about the same time.

#### Expenses of the Supper

Beef	32½ [presumably pounds] @ 7d	18/11½
8 large puddings [ingredients included suet and fruit]		14/3
Beer	24 pints	3/6

On the back of the list is a note:

Memo  
Nearly half of the puddings were left, also a good deal of Beer and some Bread.

#### The menu included

Turkey, Fowls, Pheasants, Partridge, Pigeon

A handwritten note added:

A sovereign was placed under every plate.



## SURREY CHAPEL 1854



Surrey Chapel, north end, 1900 approx.

The *Book of Remembrance* says that Bazaar Chapel became too small for the congregation and a larger building became necessary. It was opened as Ebenezer Chapel, Surrey Road, on the 21st December, 1854. The meaning of the name is 'stone of help' and comes from the Old Testament references that relate to battles both lost and won by the nation of Israel (1 Samuel chapters 4 and 7). The imposing flint and grey brick building had round-headed windows, with the cost variously reported to be £3,200 or £3,500. It is said

that £2,300 of this came from Robert Govett himself. He received no salary as minister, but there was a 'Pastor's Box' in which gifts might be placed. Nothing has been found in the November and December issues of the three local newspapers about

the opening of the new building. Much was being written about the Crimea War, especially the siege of Sebastapol and local news appears to have taken a secondary place.

The *Book of Remembrance* continues: *The church was not affiliated to any denomination,*



## A BOOK OF THANKSGIVING



and was registered simply as 'Christian', 'Undenominational'. Mr Govett's teaching was based on the Scriptures alone. 'What saith the Scriptures?' was a phrase often heard from his lips, and the answer - when found - was final.

*Beginning with the Gospel of the Grace of God, and Eternal Life a free gift through Jesus Christ, there followed the doctrines of*

- (1) Works after faith and Christian responsibility;
- (2) Reward according to Works - whether good or bad - meted out at the Judgment Seat of Christ;
- (3) The Millennial Kingdom of Christ on earth; entrance into it the highest reward but conditional;
- (4) The literal fulfilment of promises to Israel;
- (5) The literal interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount, and of the Apocalypse.

*All these Scriptures and many others formed the doctrinal foundation laid - and built upon - by Mr Govett for over 50 years, and after him by his successor Mr D M Panton.*

*The worship in Surrey Road Chapel was marked by extreme simplicity. There was no music, but a large choir of young people led the singing which was tuneful and hearty; the choirmaster starting the tunes by the aid of a wooden pitch-pipe sometimes alluded to as 'the leg of the table' by the young folk...*

*Mr Govett's preaching was entirely expository and his notes could be held in the palm of his hand! The Lord's Supper was celebrated in the evening and was open to all true*

*believers. The pastor gave an address.*

*Baptism of believers was by immersion, and in the first four years of his ministry between three and four hundred ... were baptized. (1954, p. 10)*



Charles Haddon Spurgeon

There is a letter to Mr Govett from Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the influential Baptist preacher of the 19th century (NRO FC 76/59). Mr Spurgeon writes from Clapham on the 20th October 1860, and requests some of Govett's tracts on baptism: 'to disseminate a great truth which is far too much kept in the background.' On the bottom corner of his letter is a note that reads: 'I am informed that you wisely eschew the Title of Rev - hence my addressing you as Mr.' There are further letters from Spurgeon, the last dating from 1886. It is interesting to record that through marriage, a link was established between the Govett and Spurgeon families. Robert Govett had a sister Eva (thought to be much younger than him) and towards the end of the nineteenth century she married a theologian, Dr William Spurgeon, who was a nephew of Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

## A BOOK OF THANKSGIVING



*Two prayer meetings were held weekly, and a short one before the Sunday morning service. During those years of high spiritual level in the church there were hundreds of conversions and a flourishing Sunday School. Small village churches were formed or helped*

*at Stoke Holy Cross, Bramerton, Great Moulton, Swardeston, Saxlingham Nethergate and various other villages; and brethren went to these on Sundays to minister the Word and celebrate the Lord's Supper.*



Great Moulton Chapel



The old chapel, showing the 1926 alteration



*First and foremost Robert Govett was a man of prayer. No visit was paid, no visitor received, no matter discussed without prayer being offered first; and many there were who bore grateful testimony to the strength and encouragement given as a result of an interview with R.G.*

*In addition to his ministry at the Chapel Mr Govett had gained a wide reputation in England and America as a Biblical Expositor, and tributes to his writings came from many sources. (1954, p. 10 and 12)*

One such tribute appeared as a memoir of Robert Govett in a reissue of one of his commentaries - *Govett on Galatians (Moses or Christ?)*. Pastor W J Dalby identified five characteristics:

*The first is logic. Few men equal Govett in ordered and sustained argument. He was fearless in pursuing a point to its rational conclusion; and none could put his finger more unerringly on weak spots in current theology. This brings us to a second feature - Govett's entire independence. He subjected the teachings of the Scriptures to a fresh scrutiny, not acquiescing in all the ordinary doctrines of post-Reformation Protestantism. A third characteristic of his teaching is its ordered arrangement - he was in the best sense of the term a systematic theologian. He seems to have been the first to present in a clear view the truth of reward for believers at the judgment seat of Christ and its relation to the Millennial Kingdom. A fourth feature is simplicity of style - he never sought to impress by*

*beautiful phrases, but to employ language direct and plain such as all could understand. Last but not most important of all, he ever showed a supreme desire to be faithful to the Scriptures - to reach the meaning of the Spirit and to set it forth. He revealed this not least when he confessed at times that he could not understand a particular passage or verse, and refused to wrest it in order to give a convenient explanation. (Dalby, 1930)*

Returning to the *Book of Remembrance*:

*Mr Govett was of a retiring disposition and was not well known outside the Chapel, but there were signs that he was not quite the recluse that was usually supposed. As he neared the end of his ministry the membership had visibly declined in numbers. Many of the original members had died or left the city, and of those remaining a good proportion were their sons and daughters.*

*As the end drew near various young men were invited to stay at Surrey Lodge, and assisted the aged Pastor somewhat in the capacity of curates. One of them remained seven months, and of him, more later.*

*Though Robert Govett felt his end was not far off he preached with great vigour at the age of 87, only a few weeks before his death, and the month's illness which terminated his life was rather the collapse of a worn-out personality than a specific complaint.*

*His faithful friend Mr William Dix (himself now with his Pastor in the*



*Presence of their Lord) ministered to him to the very end. As Robert Govett had lived, so he died, in the atmosphere of prayer; for his last word - though he appeared to be unconscious - was a fervent Amen to a prayer. This was on February 20th, 1901.*

*He was laid to rest at the Rosary Cemetery in the presence of a goodly number of people, including ministers from other churches in the city. (1954, p. 14-15)*

His gravestone carries the modest inscription:

IN MEMORY OF  
ROBERT GOVETT, M.A.  
FOR FIFTY SEVEN YEARS  
PASTOR OF THE CHURCH  
CONNECTED WITH SURREY ROAD CHAPEL,  
NORWICH  
WHO FELL ASLEEP 20 FEB 1901  
AGED 88 YEARS  
Until the Day dawn and the Day star arise

The inscription clearly indicates that Govett's ministry began in 1844, the date when the Bazaar Chapel began. The memorial to Govett, now sited in the entrance hall of the present chapel, has a different emphasis. It refers to the building of the Surrey Road chapel in 1854 and therefore only records the 47 years of Govett's ministry in that 'place of worship'.

Just over two weeks after the death of Mr Govett a Church Meeting was held to elect a Committee of Management for Surrey Chapel.

A week later on the 12th March 1901: 'The Committee held their first meeting to consider the best steps to take for the success of the work at Surrey Chapel.' The times of the services were altered so that the Lord's Supper followed 'the usual preaching (principally to believers)' in the morning. The evening service was to be 'of an Evangelistic nature and thrown open to outsiders'. It was agreed that: 'a powerful harmonium be introduced (not as a means of worship or attraction) but purely for the purpose of aiding the singing.' (NRO FC 76/1)





## D M PANTON 1870-1955

The *Book of Remembrance* continues:

*During the interval between the death of Robert Govett and the appointment of a successor, the little church gladly accepted the wise and kindly advice of Rev Thomas Phillips of St Mary's Baptist Church, and formed a committee to manage affairs. Neither they nor he knew that God had already chosen the new Pastor and for at least seven years had been training him for the office. A brief account of the young 'curate' who had lived seven months in the house with Mr Govett is interesting and significant, in the similarity of the spiritual experiences through which both of them passed. (1954, p. 21)*

David Morrieson Panton was: *born in Jamaica in 1870, of a Church of England family, his father being an Archdeacon, and his uncle Archbishop of the West Indies, he came to school in England in 1885. Two years were spent at the Old Hall, Wellington, and a further two years at St Lawrence's Ramsgate. From here he went to Cambridge University, entering Gonville and Caius College to read law in preparation for a legal career. (1954, p. 21)*

He came under the influence of a godly man at Cambridge who led him further along the path of discipleship, with the result that:

*For D M Panton the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount meant the end of all thought of law as a career: his life henceforth must be one of devotion to the Gospel.*



*Like Robert Govett, when he saw for the first time the truth of baptism by immersion, he obeyed it at once, and came out of the Church of England. After taking his Degree he returned to Jamaica to face his family. (1954, p. 22)*

For four years he was Resident Warden at the Ipswich Social Settlement before an invitation was received from the church at Surrey Street inviting him to become their Pastor. There is a letter in the NRO from Mr Panton to Mr Dix and a more formal one addressed to the Brethren giving 6th October 1901 as his first Sunday. He came to Norwich on a year's 'experimental' arrangement. The *Book of Remembrance* continues:

*From the beginning he was respected and loved by his flock, not only for his gracious and dignified personality, but for the stand he always took on matters of church doctrine, yielding no points where Scripture or precedent were involved.*



*His 24 years of full-time ministry were fruitful indeed, and greatly blessed of God. The undenominational traditions were maintained, also the doctrinal position of the Church. That the Holy Spirit was at work was abundantly evident in the large attendances at the prayer meetings and Bible readings, as well as on the Lord's Day. Conversions were the usual thing and baptisms followed.*

*The Sunday School also was a hive of spiritual activity, and reached a peak of over 800 scholars and 60 teachers and officers. Conversions were numerous and many of today's teachers were scholars of this period. (1954, p. 23)*

For some years during Mr Panton's ministry the practice of feet-washing was followed. Very few references have been found, but a current member of the church remembers that in Mr Panton's time a small number of brethren would meet on a Saturday night, possibly once a month.

There was a new and widening missionary interest. There is a letter from Mr Panton dated 8th June 1903 in his meticulous and clear handwriting (NRO FC 76/81). He mentions the setting up of the Missionary Band and writes:

*A Christian sister, living out of Norwich, wrote to me the other day:- 'For this privilege, this joy (of giving to Missions), I am content to wear my bonnet and dress three years behind the fashion!' This is quaint, but it is sound. I pray that God may open our hearts and purses, so that our love may find its way into other lands.*

The central pages of the *Book of Remembrance* contained photographs of Surrey Chapel missionaries and their fields of service. From 1906 to 1917, nine individuals went to China, mainly with the China Inland Mission. However, Miss M E Barber who left in March 1909 was not attached to any specific organisation. She came into contact with an 18-year-old Chinese convert, Watchman Nee. She provided him with mature spiritual advice and introduced him to a wide range of Christian literature, including works by Robert Govett and D M Panton.

Watchman Nee's ministry lasted for about thirty years. Through him churches were established and cared for, not only in China but throughout the Far East. He was arrested and imprisoned by the Communists in 1952; he was never released and died in prison in 1972.

Other mission efforts were more local. At least one current member of Surrey Chapel took part in the Cycle Mission Band, during the early years of the 1930s. On Wednesday evenings in summer 20-30 people would cycle out of Norwich, often to the villages to the south of the city such as Stoke Holy Cross, Newton Flotman or Wrenningham, and hold an open air service. It was a training ground for the younger men who were learning to lead services and preach, with the ladies providing support and singing.

Like Mr Govett, Mr Panton also wrote many theological works. This aspect of his ministry increased and in 1924 the first issue of the



*Dawn* magazine appeared, with Mr Panton as editor. The *Book of Remembrance* continues:

*Unfortunately the Pastor's health was not equal to the dual load of church plus magazine, and in view of this he retired from the ministry so far as to preach only one Sunday in each month as a rule. This was, of course, a big blow to the church, but when counsel was needed, or on special occasions D.M.P. was always 'get-at-able' and willing to help. (1954, p. 25-26)*

The monthly sermon was taken down in shorthand by a member of the congregation, and often appeared as one of the articles in a later edition of the monthly magazine.

*Like his predecessor, he received no stated salary (nor did he receive any income from the Dawn). The funds of the church were free-will offerings alone, and of these the Pastor received a percentage. No debts were allowed, no sales of work, or other begging methods of raising money for God's work. In addition to money gifts sent to missionaries other tangible proofs of love and fellowship could be seen yearly in the Chapel during Whitsun week. Materials and garments of all descriptions, fancy articles, woollen and wooden goods, hand-sewn patchwork bedspreeds and cot*



*covers, and a host of other things were displayed every year until wartime restrictions made not only the purchase of materials difficult, but their carriage also impossible. Throngs of interested visitors testified to an exhibition that was unique and well worth seeing, but marvelled that nothing was for sale.*

*In 1941 Mr Panton made the final break from Surrey Chapel and came only on special occasions from Sheringham where he had been living for several years. (1954, p. 26-27)*

The last edition of *Dawn* appeared shortly after Mr Panton's death in May 1955. Even though practically bedridden, Mr Panton had kept to his rigorous schedule, and prepared the manuscript for the June edition. A brief memoir of him was added to the last edition, which included the comment: 'He left no broken, unfinished work behind.' Mention was also made that in almost 100 years, the church had had only two pastors: 'by such an unbroken and faithful ministry, God caused great truths of fundamental importance for the well-being of His Church to be deeply rooted and established'. (Ramsay, *Dawn* 374: 164)

Meanwhile, the church carried on, with visiting speakers, missionaries and local brethren preaching, while enquiries were made by the committee about a possible pastor.



## JOHN D CLARK, DIED 1980

*In 1947 the name of Mr John D Clark was introduced to the church. He was a missionary in Ecuador under the Christian and Missionary Alliance, and a nephew of Mr Panton. Arrangements were made for him to come over to England for two months and occupy the pulpit at Surrey Chapel. It did not take Mr Clark even that length of time to win the affection of the church members, who were unanimous in their invitation to him to become their Pastor. After he had made the necessary arrangements, Mr Clark returned to Norwich in August 1948 bringing Mrs Clark and two of their sons. He was welcomed into the Pastorate at a special tea and meeting.*

*Surrey Chapel was his first experience of pastoral work and he must have found it arduous; but for 3½ years he gave devoted service, not only in the pulpit but in personal interviews and visiting and in doing many personal kindnesses. No request for a visit from Pastor Clark ever went unheeded no matter whence it came. In these duties he was ably assisted by Mrs Clark whose gracious personality endeared her to the young folk and to the women, at whose meetings she was always a welcome speaker.*

*But 'once a missionary - always a missionary'; and gradually the recall to Ecuador was felt, becoming more and more insistent as time went on, and in December 1951 Mr and Mrs Clark and family returned to the mission field. They worked for a year in the United States before*



*going on to Quito in Ecuador, from where Mr Clark broadcast the Gospel in Spanish and English from the Radio Station H.C.J.B. (1954, p. 27 and 29)*

Towards the end of the *Book of Remembrance* there is a very simple statement, followed by a single word:

*Since then the church has had no Pastor, but carries on in faith and hope for God to reveal His Plan for the Future. EBENEZER. (1954, p. 29)*

This reminded readers that the building's original name had been Ebenezer Chapel, suggesting that the church had begun with the assurance that the Lord had helped them. By closing their brief history of the hundred years of the building, the authors reminded the church of their hope for the future. They did not know they were to be without a



Pastor for a further nine years, but they continued with the conviction that the Lord had initially enabled them to raise the 'stone of help' and that his help and presence would be with them in the future.

Many responsibilities during this period fell on Mr Fred Weatherley, who had become a Deacon in 1930 and for 28 years, until 1974, held the position of Church Secretary. Much of the organisation for the centenary celebrations in 1954 were undertaken by him, including the baking of a large rectangular cake, decorated with an open book representing the scriptures.

Mr Panton was unable to be present, but made a tape recording that was played during the service on the 16th December 1954.

He suggested 'lines of thought and action' for the church and the first was: 'put the Holy Scripture above

everything - living it, loving it, mastering it, and in that order' (*Dawn* 374:192). The next Pastor of Surrey Chapel closely followed his exhortation.



## PASTOR DAVID MIDDLETON 1931-1998

David Middleton had been born and brought up in Norwich, attending the City of Norwich School, Eaton. He attended both Surrey Chapel and Hill Crest Chapel, before leaving to study at London Bible College and taking his first pastorate at the Uxbridge Road Tabernacle, Shepherds Bush. He came to Surrey Chapel in 1963 with his wife Rösli and their three daughters and remained as the Pastor until Easter 1996. The church magazine *Angle* recorded comments made by Leslie Mallett, a longstanding Deacon and sometimes Treasurer of the chapel, during the celebrations to mark the 25th anniversary of Pastor David's ministry in Norwich:

*David came to a church fragmented by differences, with many of our Sunday services mustering less than one hundred. But with much patience, and a leadership of gentle strength, over years of problems and answers, joys and sorrows, he has by the grace of God created and sustained, with a high standard of caring ministry, a large and united church. (Angle 57, 1988)*

Regarding doctrine, his stance followed more closely the lines of classic Reformed theology than did Mr Govett and Mr Panton - an emphasis that is retained to this day. Under Pastor David's ministry there was a shift away from the premillennialism actively espoused by his predecessors, towards an amillennial understanding of the biblical teaching regarding Christ's second coming. He often worked



systematically through individual books of the Bible, whether in Sunday services, or during the mid-week Bible studies. One noteworthy mid-week series was the 25 doctrinal studies *Fundamentals of the Faith*, given from February 1973 to December 1973. On Sunday mornings from September 1985 to December 1988 he worked through all 66 books of the Bible, one book per service, giving an overview of both its context as part of the whole of scripture as well as its teaching and application in the 20th century.

In 1967 a telephone ministry began, giving a pre-recorded message that was changed weekly. By late spring 1979 there had been 100,000 calls to the line. It continues today, and has been supplemented by a similar short message on the Surrey Chapel website. In the 1960s, the singing in the Sunday services was accompanied exclusively by an organ, but during the 1970s Pastor David gradually introduced the use of a piano for some of the songs.



The hymn book used for the Sunday services had been the *Redemption Hymnal* (first published 1951). As well as being an artist, Pastor David was an accomplished musician and poet, writing some hymns of his own. He was always keen for the church to be contemporary in its approach to music in worship, while retaining a commitment to the great hymnody of the past. In the early 1970s the church adopted *Hymns of Faith* (Scripture Union, 1964) as its main hymn book, supplementing this later with *Songs of Worship* (Scripture Union, 1980), which introduced more contemporary hymns and songs.

In 1984 the church was actively involved in Billy Graham's 'Mission England' and subsequently adopted the associated *Mission Praise* series as its primary hymn book. In addition, during a time of rapid change in Christian music, Surrey Chapel produced its own photocopied supplement of songs, taken from many different contemporary sources. This was subsequently overtaken by the technology of acetates on an overhead projector and then later by presentations via a laptop and a data projector.

Some individual services were broadcast on both BBC radio and BBC television; a cassette ministry, recording and distributing sermons started in January 1975; house groups began as well as church weekends, and a range of mid-week youth groups were established. Starting in 1973 the church magazine called *Angle* was produced, so named because it



gave the editor: 'the opportunity to be acute and even right, as well as obtuse' (*Angle* number 1, Easter 1973). It ran for over 100 editions, but ceased publication in July 1999.

Over the years the patterns of services have gradually changed. An undated booklet, probably printed about 1929, gives a clear picture of the regular meetings, a pattern which continued for a further 30 years. The main Sunday School was in the afternoon, with infants (3-8 years) middle school (8-18 years) and the institute ('scholars over 16').

It was not until 1998 that the Sunday School moved to the present morning position, running in parallel with the morning service. On its first morning in September of that year 105 children attended. In the late 1980s Sunday School was renamed Young Church. Since 1970 a Holiday Club for children and young people has taken place towards the end of August.



Until relatively recently, the pattern for the adult services established by the Committee in 1901 continued, with primarily 'teaching' on Sunday mornings and 'evangelistic' services in the evenings. Occasional family services were introduced by Pastor David in the 1970s and since then there has been a more flexible approach, with a varied emphasis as has been considered appropriate. A major change came in 1979 when the New International Version of the complete Bible was published, and its use for all services was agreed by the church. For many of the older members this was a hard step to take, as from childhood they had known only the King James Version.

In earlier years of Surrey Chapel, when Christmas fell on a Sunday, there were some modifications to

the usual pattern. In 1949 there was an additional afternoon service at 2.45pm 'where there will be carols etc'. In 1955 it was again on a Sunday and there was an open air service at 3.30pm on the Fair Ground. Pastor David introduced regular services on Christmas Day morning in 1971, establishing a pattern that continues today.

The first students at the University of East Anglia came to Norwich in the early 1960s. Over the years, many have come to Surrey Chapel, and Pastor David was very aware of their needs. Contacts were developed and there were special student services, often followed by lunch. Associate membership was introduced, so that those who were members of churches at home could also be involved in matters relating to the fellowship in Norwich.

In 1979 it was clear there was the need for an assistant pastor to take some of the workload from Pastor David. The church approved a proposition from the Deacons in November of that year, and Alan Black was welcomed to the church in February 1981. He left in 1984 to take the pastorate of Mill End Baptist Church, Rickmansworth. Ken Martin followed from 1986 to 1989, leaving to take the pastorate of Lancaster Baptist Church. Peter Hope came in 1990 and left in 1994, returning to teaching. Towards the end of Pastor David's ministry, the post of youth worker was established. Amanda Johnson was with the church from 1993 to 2000, and was immediately followed by the present worker, Gaius Phillingham.



## FIEC

In 1982 Pastor David took over as President of the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (FIEC). Surrey Chapel had been a founder member of the organisation, which was started in 1922 in order to show that the spiritual unity that existed between those who held a similar biblically-based position could be expressed by practical fellowship and witness.

The condition of membership is a clearly-worded statement of faith, which is displayed in the entrance hall of the present building and reaffirmed annually at the church members' meeting. It is a good summary of the theological position of Surrey Chapel.

## THE MOVE TO BOTOLPH STREET

During the early 1980s thoughts had to be given to the property. Proposals had been made for Phase 3 of Norwich City's Inner Link Road, which was shown as following the line of Chapel Loke before passing under Ber Street to cross the River Wensum by a high level bridge. The implications for the chapel buildings and access to them were great. In the Christmas edition of *Angle* in 1983 Pastor David summarised the 'Rebuilding Question'. On the basis of reports about the condition of all the buildings in Chapel Loke, it appeared that expenditure to stay and refurbish the existing properties would be about the same as the purchase of new premises.

Over the next few months, many meetings were held and sites elsewhere in the city were visited and considered. It was a time of vigorous activity in the property market, and opportunities had to be assessed rapidly so that action could be taken.



Pastor David at the Service of Thanksgiving

A property came to the attention of one chapel member. It was St Crispin's Hall on Botolph Street, beside the northern section of the Inner Link Road and next to Anglia Square, then the largest redeveloped area in the City. St Crispin's Hall had been the purpose-built headquarters of the National Union of Boot and Shoe Operatives. It consisted of a good variety of ground floor rooms, with a large first floor meeting hall.



'Topping out' of the Botolph Street building, February 1985 (photograph 'Evening News', Norwich)

Special Church Meetings were called in March and June of 1984 and after much prayer, decisions were taken to request the Trustees to sell the Chapel Loke buildings and site and to purchase St Crispin's Hall. Under the heading 'He led them forth by the right way: Psalm 107 verse 7' Pastor David wrote: 'Remember, it is not the church building we belong to, but the Lord and His people' (*Angle* 46). In a later edition (*Angle* 48), he reminded us:

*God never lets Himself be pinned down to one place, He is always on the move. The one important thing is to be the living people of God with the living God in our midst, so we need not fear the move that is before us. When we are in our new home we will be able to say, 'Surely, God is in this place', and it will be for us our*

*true Bethel, the House of God, and it will become for many the Gate of Heaven.*

The first meeting for prayer was held in the new building in September of that year, at the very beginning of building work to extend the upper hall to form the main meeting room for the chapel. The original architects for the building were the husband and wife partnership of Michael and Sheila Gooch, and they were asked to adapt the building for church use. A baptistry was incorporated into the raised area where the simple timber pulpit stands together with the oak table from the original building that is still used for the communion service. The move did not take place until the spring of the following year, with the final services taking place in the Surrey Street Chapel on the 14th April



1985. The distinctive wooden chairs that had been used in the original building since about the 1930s were moved across, remaining in use today. It was not until two years later that the old building was demolished to make way for a multi-storey car park linked to Bonds (now John Lewis department store).

The Service of Thanksgiving in the new building was on the 18th May 1985. The then Bishop of Thetford, Bishop Timothy Dudley-Smith, was the speaker and greetings were given by representatives of neighbouring churches.

In January 1988 the church celebrated 25 years of ministry by David and Röeli Middleton. Services were led by the Rev A Morgan Dereham who had originally given the 'Charge to the church' when Pastor David came in 1963.

In the early 1990s both Pastor David and his wife Röeli were unwell, and in January 1995 Pastor David announced his retirement after 32 years at Surrey Chapel. He took the Easter services that year and wrote his last pastoral letter to the church in May. In the final paragraph he wrote:

*It has always been my ambition to avoid following any particular party line, or embracing any of the changing evangelical fashions. I have endeavoured to preach Jesus Christ, to make Him central to our Church life, and to share His love with you. So as I finish my ministry it is to Him that I point you. Be loyal to Jesus Christ. Be united in Him. Move forward with Him. Always*

*grow in your love and trust for Him. Continue to pray for us as we shall for you.*

Pastor David died in 1998, following an operation. Those who were members of the church during his term as pastor look back on a time of sustained biblical ministry, with an emphasis on building up Christian believers through systematic teaching as well as the faithful preaching of the gospel to unbelievers.

His preaching and the worship of the church were from start to finish Christ-centred. Pastor David's ministry was always relevant to the real issues facing the ordinary believer, so that the church became less insular and more able to address the challenges of living in the second half of the 20th century.

His ministry was widely recognised and respected among the Christian community both in the city and nationally. It is remembered as providing a steadying influence, particularly during a period when the extremes of the charismatic movement were having a marked effect on evangelical churches. He was greatly missed by many, both members of Surrey Chapel and others.



## THOMAS CHAPMAN, BORN 1971



Tom and Suzanne Chapman with Jonathan, Murray and Wesley, October 2004

The church then began its search for another Pastor. Over a long period many candidates were considered, and it was seven and a half years before Thomas Murray Chapman was commissioned in October 2002 as the fifth Pastor of Surrey Chapel.

Born in north west Norfolk, Pastor Tom studied Natural Sciences at the University of Cambridge, specialising in geology, before becoming a pastoral assistant at his home church in Snettisham. In 1995

he returned to Cambridge to join the staff of Eden Baptist Church, initially as a ministry Trainee and then as Assistant Pastor, during which time the connection with Surrey Chapel was first fostered through the FIEC.

He studied for a year as an independent student at Oak Hill Theological College before his unanticipated return to ministry in Norfolk at the age of thirty-one, with his wife Suzanne. They have three small and lively sons; Murray, Wesley and Jonathan.



## SURREY CHAPEL IN 2004



Thanks to the faithfulness and goodness of God, Surrey Chapel continues as a thriving, city-centre church, drawing its membership and congregation from a wide geographical area. It remains an independent, evangelical church, meeting for worship, fellowship and teaching twice on Sundays, although the times of services were changed in January 2003 to 10.15 am and 6.15 pm.

The Lord's Supper is celebrated each Sunday, either at the end of the morning service or within the evening service. Pastor Tom maintains the church's traditional commitment to the authority and inspiration of the Bible, thus systematic and expository preaching form the major component of the services.

Services are markedly less formal in style than 150 years ago. Both modern and traditional Christian hymns and songs are used, accompanied as appropriate by all available musical instruments: organ, piano, brass, woodwind, strings, guitars and drums. Young Church is present for the first part of the morning service, before going to their separate groups.

The full-time youth worker is indicative of the church's commitment to young people, with Sunday and mid-week activities for them, including football training. Other mid-week activities include the Tuesday night prayer meeting and fellowship groups which meet in various homes throughout the city and the surrounding area. There are also



meetings for women, for seniors and for missionary prayer groups, as well as activities such as Surrey Sketchers (two art groups) and Surrey Smarties (a mothers' and toddlers' group). Some of the other ministries within the church are the diaconate (the current church leadership), a visiting team providing pastoral and practical care, a counselling service, local preachers, a team to welcome those coming to services and a catering team to support church events.

As the pattern of 'missionary work' has changed, so has the church's involvement with international mission. Work with students has become a major focus, with a particular commitment to supporting and providing hospitality for international students. During term-time, a Sunday morning service may see as many as 50 students from all parts of the world. Recently support has also been given to a number of specific projects in which members have been actively and practically involved, such as the Christian orphanages run by a Baptist church in Romania and an Africa Inland Mission rural agricultural project in Kenya. A number of young people in the church undertake short-term placements in Christian work around the globe and

are given both practical and prayer support from the church.

To coincide with the 150th anniversary a number of significant developments are being examined, concerning the government of the church. Consideration is being given to the appointment of 'elders' - church members who together with the Pastor would have corporate spiritual authority to oversee the affairs of the Church. The office of 'deacon' is to be re-examined, following New Testament principles, to give opportunities for men and women with particular gifts to take practical responsibility for designated areas of the church's work and activity.

A new Trust Deed for the ownership of the building together with a Constitution are being put before the membership at the end of November 2004.





## AND SO IT GOES ON ...



In the pulpit at the first Surrey Chapel, and on the platform at the second, has stood an early edition of the King James Version of the Bible dated 1640. It was 'once found on a kerbside barrow in London' by Lewis Lupton, a gifted artist and member of the Uxbridge Road 'Tab' who remained a close friend of the Middleton family when they moved from Shepherds Bush to Norfolk. He gave it to Pastor David, who in turn passed it on to Surrey Chapel when he retired. It remains, the open book of Scripture that we look to for knowledge of God, and guidance for our day to day lives.

A letter from Lewis Lupton (published in *Angle* 26) begins by quoting parts of Coverdale's translation of Psalm 91, about those

who are privileged to 'abide under the shadow of the Almighty', before reminiscing over past years and the intertwining of events in the lives of God's people. He concluded:

*'And so it goes on, a tale that will not end.'*

We thank God for the small part that Surrey Chapel has played in the history of his church, and we rejoice in the knowledge that the wider narrative, the story of God's sovereign love and grace, will never end.



In edition 47 of *Angle* a member of Surrey Chapel, the late William Taylor, wrote in some detail about the history of Botolph Street and its surrounding area.

*Cherry Lane ran from Pitt Street, along the wall of our new building ... In 1769 a small chapel was built which was known as the 'Cherry Lane Wesleyan Chapel'. John Wesley preached there and in 1783 Dr Adam Clarke became the Minister. He was a renowned preacher and great Biblical scholar and author. He was also one of the small band of men which included John and Charles Wesley, who were responsible for giving guidance and counsel to the early Methodists ... Eventually this chapel became inadequate for an increasing congregation, and in 1810 the people moved two streets away, to the newly built Calvert Street Wesleyan Chapel ...*

*At the end of Pitt Street and just below the surface of Botolph Street car park are the ruins of one of the oldest cruciform Saxon churches in the City. On the opposite side of Pitt Street, almost in line with Cherry Lane (though not visible) stood the Gildencroft Meeting House, built by the Quakers ... The Gildencroft Men's Adult School met in this building every Sunday morning for several years, and one of the unique features was that though this was a Quaker place of worship, a Gospel meeting was held there every Sunday evening with Sankey hymns and music provided by a piano and two violins. In my young days I had the pleasure of often preaching at these evangelistic services.*

*I find it rather thrilling to think that in this area, where the songs of Zion were sung, and the Word of God preached, is once again (God willing) to be the place where the Lord's people gather. I trust and hope that we shall receive as much blessing, and make as effective a witness, as these dear people did in their day and generation all those years ago.*



*Surrey Chapel pulpit, present day*

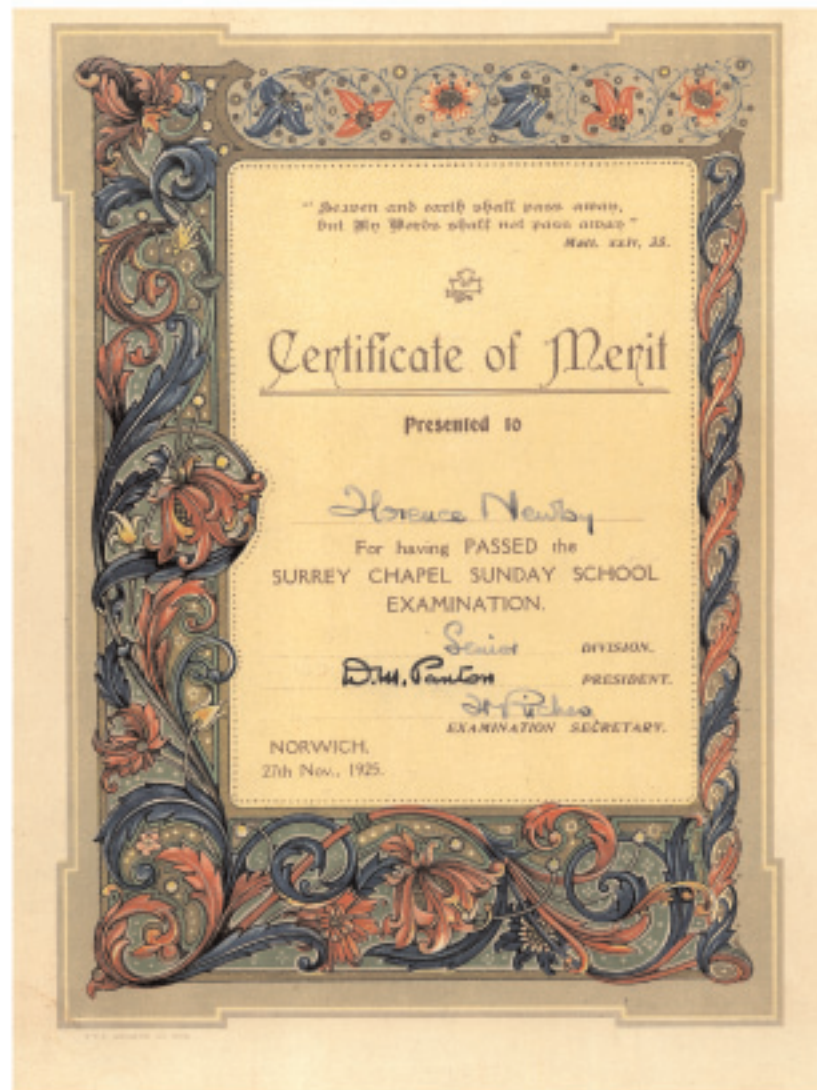




SERVICES AT SURREY CHAPEL		SURREY CHAPEL	
		PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF THE CHURCH.	
<b>SUNDAY</b>		1. Its identity is purely Evangelical and Unconformist.	
Morning Service . . . . .	10.45	2. The Word of God is made the sole Authority in faith and practice.	
Communion Service . . . . .	11.30	3. "Crisis Church" is preached and a Full, Free and Immediate Salvation proclaimed "through faith in His Name."	
Sunday School . . . . .	2.30	4. Only Believers are Baptized, on personal profession of faith.	
Breakfast . . . . .	2.45	5. The Lord's Supper is observed every Lord's Day. Believers as such, are invited to partake.	
Evening Service . . . . .	6.45	6. All expenses are met by voluntary offerings.	
<b>TUESDAY</b>		7. Visitors are heartily welcomed and are invited to make themselves known to the Pastor or Deacons.	
Prayer Meeting . . . . .	7.45		
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>			
Women's Work . . . . .	8.45		
Men's Bible Class . . . . .	7.45		
<b>THURSDAY</b>			
Bible Reading . . . . .	2.45		

SURREY CHAPEL SUNDAY SCHOOL GATHERINGS		SURREY CHAPEL	
SUNDAY MEETINGS		WEEK EVENING ACTIVITIES	
<b>MORNING</b>		<b>MONDAY</b>	
Junior School (Scolars 5-14 years)	10.45	Junior Boys' Class (Scolars 8-14 years)	6.45
Young Men's Union (Scolars 16-18 years)	10.45	Bible Lesson and Hand Work for Menstruates.	
<b>AFTERNOON</b>		Senior Ladies' Class (Scolars over 14 years)	8
Infants Department (Held in Surrey Road Council Schools (Scolars 2-4 years))	2.30	Bible Lesson and Trivial Lessons.	
Middle School (Held in Chapel (Scolars 5-10 years))	2.30	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	
Teenagers (Held in Lower House (Scolars over 10 years))	2.45	Junior Girls' Class (Scolars 8-14 years)	6.30
<b>EVENING</b>		Bible Lesson and Sewing Class.	
All elder Scolars are invited to attend the Service in the Chapel . . . . .	6.45	Senior Girls' Class (Scolars over 14 years)	7.45
		Bible Lesson and Sewing Class.	
		The above Classes are held during the Winter Months.	
		<b>YOUNG CHRISTIANS' FELLOWSHIP CLASSES</b>	
		HELD EACH MONTH	
		Girls . . . . .	7.45
		Boys . . . . .	7.30 2nd Friday

Pages from the undated booklet 'You and your children', which gives a summary of chapel activities, probably about the 1930s



A 1925 Sunday School Certificate



Senior Institute outing to Carleton Road



Young Christians Fellowship Classes



Surrey Lodge, formerly the Pastor's residence



**Census of Great Britain, 1851.**  
(13 and 14 Victoria, cap. 43).

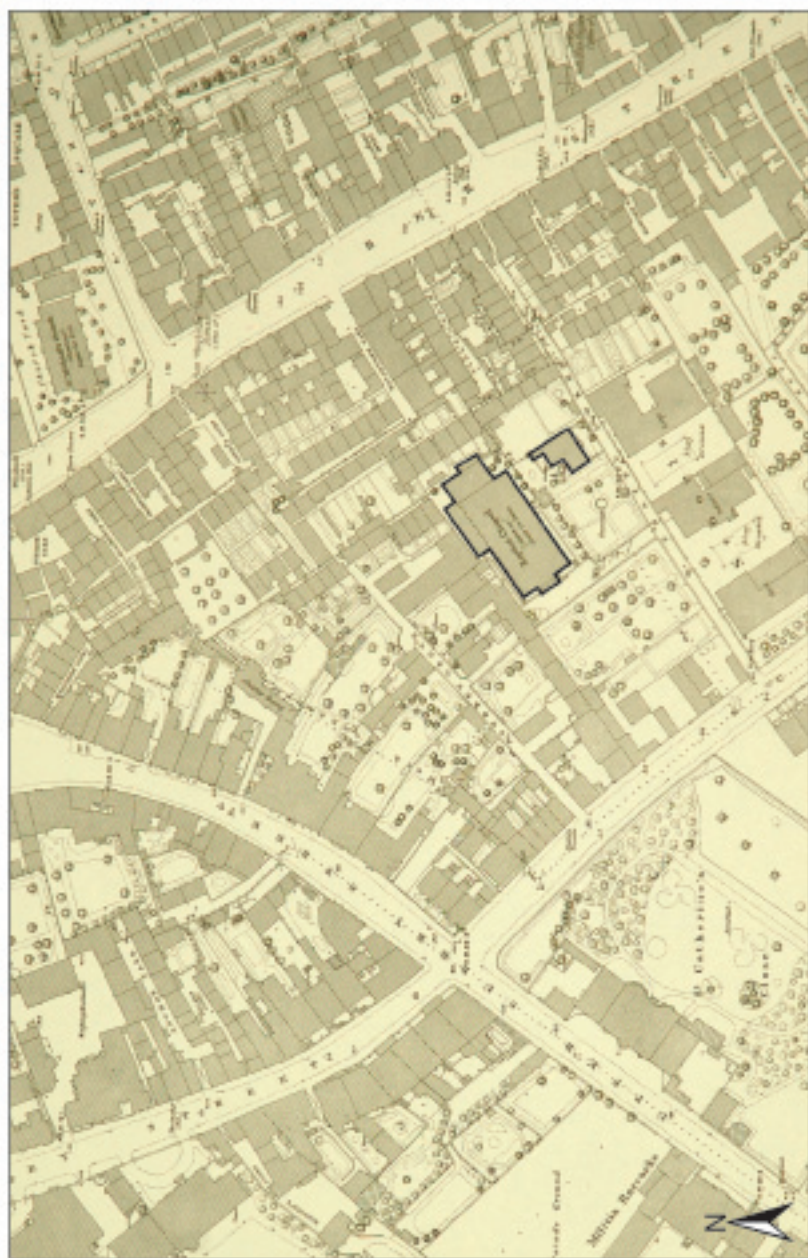
**A RETURN**  
OF THE SEVERAL PARTICULARS TO BE INQUIRED INTO RESPECTING THE UNDESIGNATED  
**PLACE OF PUBLIC RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.**

(To be filled up by the Clergy of the Diocese of Exeter, and also by the Managers of any other Religion, inasmuch as they are directed to do so by the Statute in that behalf made.)

I. Name of the Place of Worship	II. Worshippers: according to Religion		III. Religious Dedication	IV. When Instituted	V. Whether a Separate Building is used for Worship (If not, for what purpose)	VI. Whether any other Place of Worship is used for the same purpose	VII. Does any other Place of Worship exist in the Parish or Vicarage District?	VIII. Estimated Number of Persons attending Divine Service on Sunday, March 30, 1851			IX. REMARKS		
	English Protestant	Catholic						Other	General Congregation	Female		Male	Total
Surrey Chapel Surrey	100	0	0	1840	Yes	Yes	Yes	500	150	350	250	600	Remarks: This is a new building erected in 1840. It is situated in the parish of St. Andrew, Exeter. It is a simple and elegant structure, and has been well attended since its opening.

I certify the foregoing to be a true and correct Return to the best of my belief.  
Worship my hand this 30th day of March 1851.  
X. (Signature) ..... Robert Govett  
(Official Character) .....  
(Address by Post) ..... Battle, Devon, Exeter.

Entry for the Bazaar Chapel, signed by Robert Govett, (reference TNA (PRO) HO/129/234.68) from the 1851 'Census of Great Britain: places of public worship' [reproduced by kind permission of The National Archive (PRO)]



The first Surrey Chapel - reproduced from the 1885 Ordnance Survey Map with kind permission of the Ordnance Survey (Sheet LXII.15.8. Surveying took place in 1883)



## REFERENCES

At the Centenary of the opening of the building in Chapel Lake, a 29-page history was written called *Surrey Chapel Book of Remembrance, 1854-1954*. Extensive use has been made of this booklet.

Angle. Church magazine, active from 1973 to 1999.

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Ede, J. and Virgoe, N. 1998. *Religious Worship in Norfolk: the 1851 census of accommodation and attendance at worship*. Norfolk Record Society Volume LXXI.

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## OTHER SOURCES

The Norfolk Record Office contains a large collection of documents that were deposited by Pastor David Middleton and the Deacons in 1955. They are available for study at The Archive Centre, adjacent to County Hall, Martinus Lane, Norwich. The 178 records range from photographs and plans, to pastoral letters and accounts. The Record Office notes that the actual building that became known as Surrey Chapel was financed and managed principally by Govett himself, and in consequence it was not until after his death in 1901 that any pattern of church government was developed. The series of Minute Books therefore begin in 1901 and continue unbroken in the Record Office to 1980. The collection is referenced as NRO FC 76 (Norfolk Record Office; Free Church number 76), followed by the number of the individual record.

We are grateful for the permissions given by various authorities for material that has been included in this booklet. The Ordnance Survey gave permission to reproduce a map (page 32). The National Archive (PRO) for the reproduction of entry HO/129/234.69 from the 1851 *Census of Great Britain: places of public religious*

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worship (page 31), and Archant Ltd for the reproduction of the photograph that originally appeared in the *Eastern Evening News*, 1st March 1985 (page 21).

I have been greatly helped by many individuals who have given their time to help in the compilation of this history, especially Dr Derek Haylock and Miss Ruth Dix. Mr James Paton took the text and assorted illustrations and skilfully combined them into the final document. Mr E P Wilson, Fellow Librarian and Archivist of Worcester College, Oxford, provided further material about Robert Govett. Mrs D Suckling, a distant relation of Robert Govett, gave information about his family. Photographs of Pastor Tom Chapman and family, present day pulpit and children's artwork were taken by Mrs Jacqueline Paton.

I am also grateful to many in the congregation who talked with me about their involvement and experiences of Surrey Chapel, and others who have handed on memorabilia concerning the church. These will be catalogued and added to the archive.



## PERSONAL POSTSCRIPT

Much more could be written about Surrey Chapel and the part it has played in the city of Norwich. The local papers published since the mid-19th century require more thorough examination. Many individuals, some briefly mentioned, deserve further study as does the structure of the church government at different periods and the various theological nuances that were present. There are many unanswered questions. How did Mr Govett obtain the land for the 1854 building? The drawings in the Norfolk Record Office were clearly an early design, as they were not the same as the structure that was built. Did Mr Govett require the building to be designed so as to be the same size as the Temple in the Old Testament, or was that

relationship a coincidence? Passing comments about practices and traditions in the church have been fascinating. Only one external reference has been found about the services for foot washing - when was the practice adopted and when did it cease? Did the influential Chinese Christian, Watchman Nee, ever speak at Surrey Chapel?

Many matters have only been covered in outline, and much remains unexplored. Investigations can be carried out at many levels, whether by a doctorate student, or by an individual who enjoys using libraries or rummaging around and sorting the contents of dusty filing cabinets. The scope is endless and the results will surely be rewarding.

Rosamunde Codrington



## APPENDIX 1: NUMBERS ATTENDING

Whilst recognising that numbers attending services is a poor guide to the health, or otherwise, of a church, it has been interesting to bring together various references relating to the numbers of people attending. A carefully prepared single page summary, written in a meticulous copperplate hand, records that for the seven years of 1844 to 1850, 498 were received into church fellowship. Of these, 112 were withdrawn from membership, for a variety of reasons. Some were later readmitted, so that by 1850, membership stood at a total of 386. The 1851 census gives attendance figures of 459 in the morning, 180 in the afternoon and 210 in the evening.

The report of Mr Govett's death in the *Eastern Daily Press* appeared on the 21st February 1901. It suggests that whilst there had been congregations of 200 in 1892, there were only about 60 in 1900.

Several sources suggest that in the 1920s the Sunday School had 600 children and 60 teachers (*Angle 22*). When a presentation was made to Mr Panton in 1929, the record suggests a congregation of about 300. By 1953 there were 254 members, but it appears that when Pastor David came to the church in 1962 there were under a hundred members. By 1977 this had risen to 234 members and 2 associates (temporary residents of Norwich, usually students)

Current membership stands at 175 with attendance at Sunday services of about 240 in the morning and 100 in the evening.

In addition to membership numbers, it was interesting to find documents in the Norfolk Record Office (NRO FC/76 89) that contain the numbers baptised at 'Surrey Road, Saxlingham and Moulton'. No breakdown is given for the three chapels - a single number is listed against the years:

1885	91
1886	74
1887	138
1888	100
1889	68
1890	50
1891	56
1892	33
1893	28
1894	26
1895	23?
1896	30
1897	14

Number of baptisms at Surrey Road, Saxlingham and Moulton.



## APPENDIX 2: FIEC STATEMENT OF FAITH

### 1. GOD

There is one God, who exists eternally in three distinct but equal persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God is unchangeable in his holiness, justice, wisdom and love. He is the almighty Creator, Saviour and Judge who sustains and governs all things according to his sovereign will for his own glory.

### 2. THE BIBLE

God has revealed himself in the Bible, which consists of the Old and New Testaments alone. Every word was inspired by God through human authors, so that the Bible as originally given is in its entirety the Word of God, without error and fully reliable in fact and doctrine. The Bible alone speaks with final authority and is always sufficient for all matters of belief and practice.

### 3. THE HUMAN RACE

All men and women, being created in the image of God, have inherent and equal dignity and worth. Their greatest purpose is to obey, worship and love God. As a result of the fall of our first parents, every aspect of human nature has been corrupted and all men and women are without spiritual life, guilty sinners and hostile to God. Every person is therefore under the just condemnation of God and needs to be born again, forgiven and reconciled to God in order to know and please him.

### 4. THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

The Lord Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, and lived a sinless life in obedience to the Father. He taught with authority and all his words are true. On the cross he died in the place of sinners, bearing God's punishment for their sin, redeeming them by his blood. He rose from the dead and in his resurrection body ascended into heaven where he is exalted as Lord of all. He intercedes for his people in the presence of the Father.

### 5. SALVATION

Salvation is entirely a work of God's grace and cannot be earned or deserved. It has been accomplished by the Lord Jesus

Christ and is offered to all in the gospel. God in his love forgives sinners whom he calls, granting them repentance and faith. All who believe in Christ are justified by faith alone, adopted into the family of God and receive eternal life.

### 6. THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit has been sent from heaven to glorify Christ and to apply his work of salvation. He convicts sinners, imparts spiritual life and gives a true understanding of the Scriptures. He indwells all believers, brings assurance of salvation and produces increasing likeness to Christ. He builds up the Church and empowers its members for worship, service and mission.

### 7. THE CHURCH

The universal Church is the body of which Christ is the head and to which all who are saved belong. It is made visible in local churches, which are congregations of believers who are committed to each other for the worship of God, the preaching of the Word, the administering of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, for pastoral care and discipline, and for evangelism. The unity of the body of Christ is expressed within and between churches by mutual love, care and encouragement. True fellowship between churches exists only where they are faithful to the gospel.

### 8. BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

Baptism and the Lord's Supper have been given to the churches by Christ as visible signs of the gospel. Baptism is a symbol of union with Christ and entry into his Church but does not impart spiritual life. The Lord's Supper is a commemoration of Christ's sacrifice offered once for all and involves no change in the bread and wine. All its blessings are received by faith.

### 9. THE FUTURE

The Lord Jesus Christ will return in glory. He will raise the dead and judge the world in righteousness. The wicked will be sent to eternal punishment and the righteous will be welcomed into a life of eternal joy in fellowship with God. God will make all things new and will be glorified forever.



Example of artwork created by Young Church in 2004



## ANNIVERSARY HYMN

*God of all our history and Lord of present days,  
God of the future years, we offer now our praise:  
great is your sovereignty; your good and perfect will  
through passing centuries your purposes fulfil.*

*God of all our history, your faithfulness and power,  
unchanged through changing years, have brought us to this hour;  
your guiding hand has shaped your people's presence here,  
to honour Christ the Lord, his gospel truth declare.*

*God of all our present times, whose love is new each day,  
within your purposed plan grant us the faith to stay;  
and for eternal truth to boldly take our stand,  
that once again your name be honoured in our land.*

*God of all our future years, whatever they may hold,  
with confidence we trust your purpose to unfold;  
in all things, for our good, your sovereign will we trace,  
our every circumstance encompassed by your grace.*

*God of all our history and Lord of present days,  
God of the future years, we offer now our praise:  
you rule eternally, as kingdoms rise and fall,  
your kingdom shall endure till Christ is Lord of all.*

Hymn written for the 150th Anniversary of Surrey Chapel, Norwich,  
December 2004 by Derek Haylock, the Coordinator of Music in Worship