

THE PRESENT CHAPEL

As the young Baptist congregation gathered for its first year of worship in its new building, still there as the centre part of our present building, the wider world was seeing changes too. Across the Atlantic ocean, in particular, a new nation had won its freedom from Britain — the United States of America (1776), and as our congregation moved into its present buildings, George Washington became the first President of the United States.

Much history came to be written as the Chapel became the centre of a mainly agricultural congregation's spiritual life. Very soon, alterations and extensions had to be made to the building, and in 1794 the baptistery was dug inside the chapel. It remains an important feature in the life of the church. Baptists, remember, baptise Believers, those who have come to faith in Christ. We hope there will be many others who will wish to confess their faith, by going through the water of this historic baptistery.

Though an independent Baptist Church, Chenies has long-standing close links with many other churches of different denominations in our county and area. It is our constant pleasure to welcome visiting preachers to lead us in worship.

Linked initially with Dagnall Street Baptist Church, St. Albans, it was not long before Chenies had become a 'mother' church in its own right, and soon after 1791 other Baptist churches had been formed in Chipperfield, Bovington, Flaunden, and Mill End, Rickmansworth. In 1850, Chenies members living in the village of Sarraat decided to build their own church there, and this they did in 1855.

Renovations and maintenance of old buildings is a continuing commitment and we would like to thank all who have helped in the recent renovations and in giving down through the years.

THE CHURCH NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

As we move to the close of this century and the start of the next, we believe there is a further place in history for the work of God, here, in Chenies.

It is partly for this reason that so many have given generously towards the large-scale renovations and redecoration work just completed. However, we have further plans in hand for the improvement of our premises and trust that these will help forward the work even more.

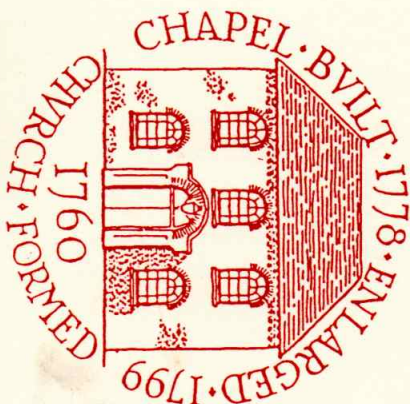
We are an Evangelical Christian church, Baptist by denomination, but wide in outlook and affection. We hope you find us to be, despite our long history, a contemporary, lively, committed and outgoing church, interested in all the family, and desiring to share the full Christian message of God's love and salvation through Jesus Christ.

Whilst the enclosed card will give you a typical 'month' of our regular activities at-a-glance, it by no means exhausts the variety of ministry and fellowship of the church.

We are aware that God has set the chapel amid wonderful countryside and in a charming village. Over the years numbers of groups from other churches have come to have a Weekend here, or even use the premises for a day. We love to welcome people in this way.

"May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." 2 Corinthians 13.

For further information telephone Chorleywood (0923) 284878.



CHENIES BAPTIST CHURCH

— An Introduction



May we introduce you briefly to Chenies Baptist Church, where folk have worshipped God for over two hundred years, and with a history beyond the scope of this little brochure.

A place loved, visited, and made 'spiritual home' by thousands of people since it was built in 1778, whether as children to the Sunday School, young people to the Bible Class or Club, or adults to a haven and place of friendship and sharing with those that love God.

Throughout its history, the Bible has been at the heart of the church's ministry, and remains so today as direction and encouragement is given in dealing with life and its problems through the Bible's message and the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Chenies Baptist Church — friendly and welcoming, a place with a sense of history — now entering the 21st century.

We're so glad you've called — please make yourself known to us — further information is available.

THE BEGINNING

The origins of our church go back in history to the reigns of George II and George III of England, and when William Pitt the Elder was Prime Minister. It was the age of the Wesleys, when John, the founder of Methodism, was preaching the length and breadth of the British Isles and when his brother Charles, the world-

renowned hymn-writer, was composing so many of his great songs of worship.

Buckinghamshire had its place in the Christian music of that time too. At Olney, John Newton the former slave-master turned Christian pastor, and author of "Amazing Grace", had asked the poet and hymn-writer William Cowper, to write hymns for the Tuesday evening Prayer Meetings. From Cowper's pen came such gems as "God moves in a mysterious way" and "Oh, for a closer walk with God".

On the wider musical scene it was the age of the great composer Franz Joseph Haydn, whose wonderful oratorio "The Creation" and particularly the excerpt "The Heavens are Telling" is worthy to stand beside Handel's best pages. It was also the time when in Austria, a young genius, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was busily learning the piano, and so soon, at the mere age of eight, to come from Salzburg to London to give a recital of his own compositions for harpsichord and piano.

In general life, it was the time of the invention of the steam engine by James Watt, of the Spinning Jenny by James Hargreaves and the establishment of the famous potteries by Josiah Wedgwood.

It was against the backdrop of such events that a few folk were getting together in Green Street, not far from the present chapel, to form a Christian fellowship independent of any local church. A room in a building was prepared for their use and they started to meet in 1760 with a membership of twenty three. The work grew and in 1776 they were seeking a new and bigger meeting place. They built the new chapel on the present site in 1778.

