

Knowle United Reformed Church

Station Road, Knowle Solihull, West Midlands B93 0HN



Pastorate Profile



We are

- ◆ **Welcoming**
- ◆ **Caring**
- ◆ **Growing**
- ◆ **Searching**

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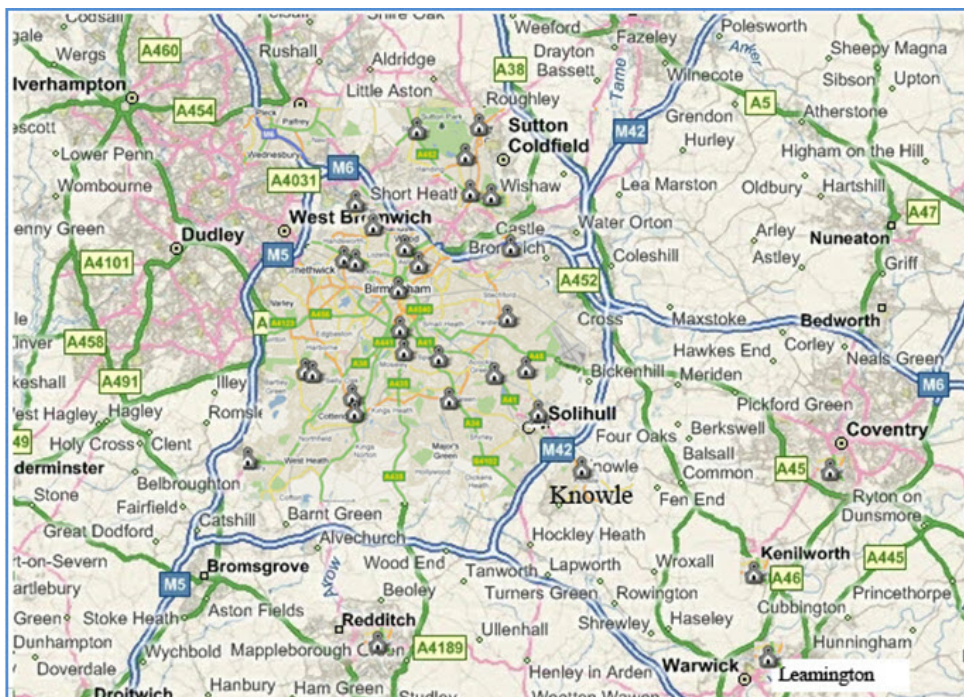
Where are we?

We are Knowle United Reformed Church, and we became a joint pastorate with Digbeth-in-the-Field URC in 2007 with a 25% scoping. Since then, the membership has grown from 36 to 62.

Knowle URC is situated in Knowle village, which is semi-rural. Knowle has an attractive village atmosphere and adjoins the villages of Dorridge and Bentley Heath, all being within the Metropolitan Borough of Solihull. Solihull and Birmingham conurbations lie to the North, Coventry to the East and Leamington, Kenilworth and Warwick to the South. A substantial number of dwellings have been built during the last twenty years, with accommodation ranging from two bedroom flats to extensive detached houses. The area is still being developed with in-fill houses, a number now being built for the older generation.

We are a member of the Local Churches Together with five neighbouring churches, three of which are Anglican (nearby Knowle Parish Church was consecrated in 1402). There is a large Roman Catholic church in Dorridge and a large Methodist Church in Dorridge.

We also meet regularly with the other URC churches in our cluster, which itself is one of four in Birmingham.



The map shows the location of all churches in the Birmingham area of the URC, as well as our nearest churches in the rest of the Synod – Coventry, Kenilworth, Leamington Spa and Redditch.

Who are we?

Brief pen portrait

The first non-conformist Chapel was opened in Knowle High Street in 1835. A covenant was signed in 1876 supporting a separate Congregational Church, who then moved round the corner to Station Road in 1932. Our style of worship is mostly traditional, though we also enjoy different types of service such as Café Worship. Although our church was originally Congregational, many of us have Presbyterian, Methodist and other backgrounds. We are a growing, caring and welcoming fellowship.

Building

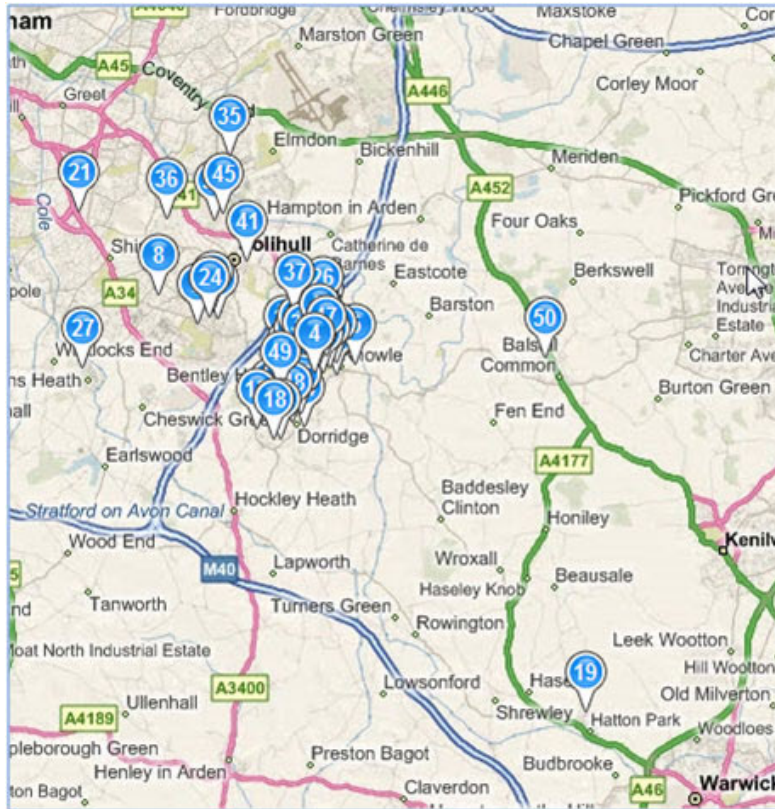
The present building was constructed in 1932 in the Dutch style. It has a beautiful interior and sanctuary. To many, a feeling of quiet, peace and friendliness pervades as they enter the building. It stands in its own grounds (a focus for regular church 'gardening fellowship'!) with a church hall used by groups from the local community.



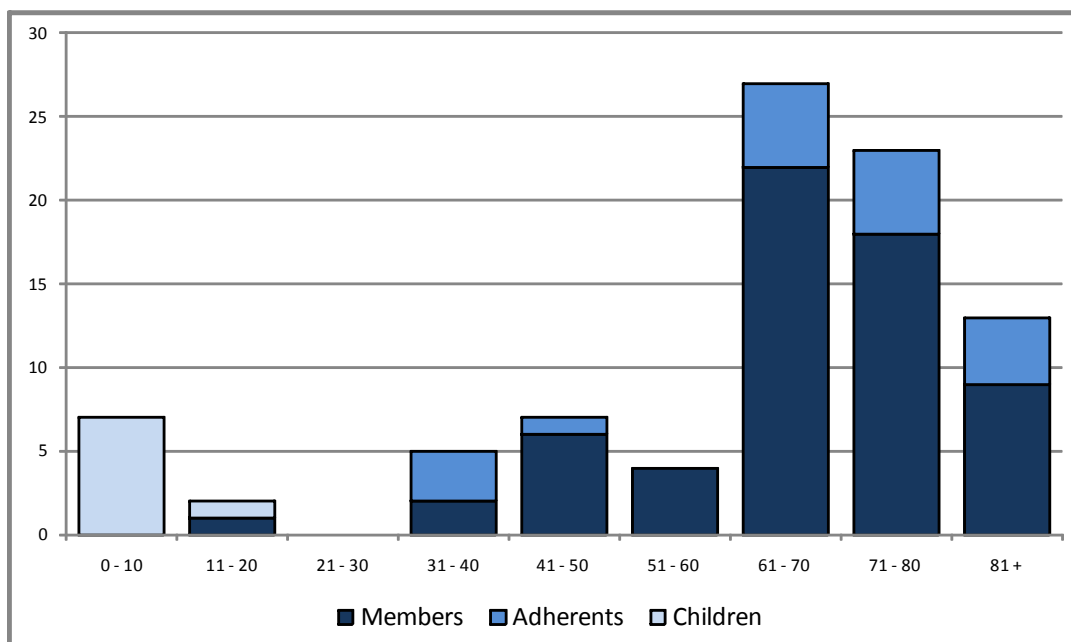
A lot of additional information can be found at our website www.knowleurc.co.uk

Statistics

- a) Number of members 62
- b) Number of adherents 18
- c) Number of children 8
- d) Over 50% are retired people
- e) Where members and adherents live



f) Age distribution of the members, adherents and children



g) Change in membership in recent years

Year	At start of year	By profession of faith	Transfer in	Moved away	Died	At end of year
2006	34	4		1		37
2007	37				1	36
2008	36	5	8		1	48
2009	48		8		1	55
2010	55					55
Total		9	16	1	3	

St. Ninian's URC, Solihull, closed in 2007. Thirteen of its members subsequently joined Knowle URC. This greatly widened the area where our churchgoers live. The number of adherents has grown too, with 5 joining our fellowship in 2010. Just before Easter 2011, membership increased to 62.

h) Average Attendance on Sundays and Wednesdays (details in the Appendix)

	Sunday	Wednesday
Members	36	6
Adherents	2	3
Children	4	0
External Minister/Organist	2	0
Visitors	2	0
Total	46	9

2 adherents worship on Wednesday but rarely or never on Sunday

- i) There are 11 serving elders and 18 who are currently non-serving elders
- j) There are 2 to 3 baptisms a year. Last year one teenager and one young adult were baptised

What do we do?

WORSHIP

Our church is United Reformed in outlook. Sunday worship starts at 9.30 a.m. Our style of worship is mostly traditional, with the whole family worshipping at the start of services and children leaving later for their own activities. We also enjoy different types of service such as Café Worship. Members of the congregation take part in the services by reading the Bible and sometimes leading prayers of intercession. Several times a year services are taken by the Elders, worship group and members of the congregation.

Communion has been celebrated on the fourth Sunday each month, which is when our minister has been available to lead worship. Other services are led by lay preachers, mostly from the Birmingham area. Midweek services start at 11 a.m. on the second and fourth Wednesdays in the month.



Our children, of whom six attend regularly, are aged from two years to seven years and they welcome visitors who have come to see grandparents etc. They are very lively and friendly; they enjoy the children's slot in the service and also their own activities when they leave. There are four leaders with support from eight helpers working on a monthly rota. The junior church follows the Roots scheme and have participated in special services such as Easter, Harvest and Christmas. Each child on the cradle roll under the age of five is sent a birthday card. We present each young person with a Bible when they reach the age of thirteen.

Music plays an important part in our worship and we have a choir - led by one of our talented members - who practise most weeks after coffee

following Sunday worship. Our church is decorated with fresh flowers each week by different members, who may wish to dedicate them as they celebrate a special event or remember a loved one. We have a Worship committee which meets with the minister three times a year to arrange worship and to suggest different ways to improve the worship.

The Prayer Group meet on the second Sunday of each month after church. A book is openly available in the church for anyone to place their prayer requests.

LEADERSHIP

There are at present 29 elders (11 serving), which is nearly 50% of the membership. There is a meeting every month except December, either an Elders' Meeting or a quarterly Church Meeting. The latter are held in January, March (also the A.G.M.), June and September. We are experimenting by holding one Church Meeting after Sunday worship, to encourage even more to take part.

CARE and NURTURE

Our pastoral care group support some of the elders to make sure that people are looked after, especially in times of need.

There are one or two Bible study programmes each year, usually in Lent and Advent. They are well attended and help us to explore our faith and beliefs.

SOCIAL

Knowle URC is a small Church with a family atmosphere and everyone knows each other. We not only worship and try to be effective practising Christians together, but we also enjoy each other's company. We have a social event most months - these vary from quizzes to excursions and have included a barn dance, talks, Scottish evening, coffee mornings, short walks ended by a pub lunch as well as Christmas meals at the previous Church building (now an Indian restaurant). See the Appendix for details on the popularity of 2010 events and the number of visitors attracted.



One of the strong features of our church, and one which encourages new people to stay, is the friendliness. Newcomers are immediately made to feel part of the church by the warm welcome they are given. This includes members coming to talk to them, warm handshakes and welcomes, invitations to coffee where they can have a sit-down chat. In time, they are invited to be part of the life of the church - by being on the reader's rota, joining the choir or taking part and helping with social events. Several of our members first tried one of the local, larger Churches, but felt they were still strangers after several visits. We try to ensure that this does not happen but also try to allow people space and time to settle into our church family creating an inclusive atmosphere.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Village activities

Our church supports and has a presence at the Knowle Fun Run, and the Knowle Park Festival. Some members regularly help in the community - at Job's Close Residential Care Home and Solihull hospital.



Charities

We usually support two local and two international charities each year, as well as the Samaritan's Purse shoe box appeal. The collections and all money raised at the Harvest Festival are used to support local charities. The Christmas and Carol Service collections are used to support a hospital in India. Money collected during Communion services is given to overseas charities.



In total, 7 to 10% of our income is donated to charities.

Hall usage

The hall is located behind (and linked to) the Church and is used by a wide range of organizations:-

Babes and Toddlers: Mums and Mites (which was started by the Church), Molly Music

Children: Beavers and Cubs (they are sponsored by the Church and have free use of the facilities).

Youth: SOSage Factory (a drama group for teenagers which uses the church for rehearsals and is led by two members of our congregation).

Fitness: Yoga, Pilates and Keep Fit.

Dance: Scottish, Tap, Arden School of Dance, Belly.

What are we here for?

Our mission statement is:

To provide worship
To promote Christian beliefs, values and morals
To offer a warm welcome to everyone
To be at the heart of the community
To offer a place for community groups to meet
To offer a distinctive United Reformed witness in Knowle and the surrounding area
To help people explore the Christian faith in an open and non-judgemental atmosphere

What are our resources?

People

The congregation is a group of people who have a history of supporting the church. It is a community where everyone is involved, and wants to be involved. Some organise socials, bake cakes, or make teas for those pruning trees. In addition, some look after our finances, youth, music, visiting preachers and flowers in the church. There are those who...



- Create and publish our free, monthly magazine,
- Maintain buildings and grounds,
- Organise and run Fairs and stalls,
- Maintain and develop the website,
- Attend the cluster group, Local Churches Together, or contribute to Synod, Synod Property, Finance and Executive Committees.

Finance

A copy of the accounts for the year ending December 31st 2010 is in the appendices. In summary, income broadly matched outgoings. Exceptional expenditure included new doors to the hall (£2,100) and painting half of the outside walls of the church (to be finished in 2011). The repainting costs of £1,100 would have been thousands more if the work had not been done by church members. Income should rise by more than £2,000 this year; charges for using the hall have been raised by 25%, and there has been no reduction in hall usage. Nearly 10% of church income was given to local and international charities. Reserves stand at over £31,500, including the heating replacement reserve.

Opportunities and challenges

- Develop our Junior Church, to continue attracting our current boys (and girl) to church into their teens.
- Strengthen links with User Groups, especially with the Scouting groups that have free use of the Church Hall.
- Consider renewing links with local schools (a previous minister went into the local 11-18 secondary school (Arden) to work with children).
- Strengthen our links with the Churches together group so that we can get to know each other better.

What are we looking for from a minister?

- Someone to support and help develop the spiritual side of our church life
- Someone who can work and communicate well with a wide range of people from the very young children to the fairly old. Someone who is enthusiastic and friendly.
- Someone who will encourage the children to stay in the church into their teenage years.
- Someone who is a good pastoral minister prepared to visit the lonely, the sick both those at home and in hospital.
- A person who will take an interest in current activities and attend them
- Someone who wants to develop and expand the membership.
- A minister who can communicate with the local community (local schools?) and groups which use the church. Someone who will encourage parents and children who use the church during the week to want to join the church.
- Someone who can maintain and develop existing links with the local churches in Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath.

Appendix A: Attendance at Services and Church Events in 2010

Frequency individuals attended Church on Sundays & Wednesdays in 2010

Sunday & Wednesday		Members*	Adherents **	Children
Weekly	70+%	29	2	3
Usually	60 to 70%	8	0	2
Regularly	50 to 60%	10	2	1
	40 to 50%	3	1	0
Sometimes	20 to 30%	5	2	0
Occasionally	5 to 10%	7	3	0
Rarely	1 to 5%	0	8	2
Total		62	18	8
Male		21	11	6
Female		41	7	2

* 1 is now seriously ill and can no longer attend

** Most of the adherents in the 1-5% group are family members

Attendance at Social and Fund Raising Events ***

	Talk	Dance	Auction	Gdn Centre	Treasure Hunt	Safari
	Jan	Mar	Apr	May	Jul	Aug
Members	26	22	19	18	27	22
Adherents	3	1	0	4	1	4
Children	0	0	0	0	9	0
Visitors	8	18	0	0	5	0
Total	37	41	19	22	42	26
	H. Supper	Walk 1	Talk	Walk 2	Indian Meal	Xmas Fayre
	Sep	Oct	Oct	Nov	Dec	Dec
Members	25	10	26	7	26	28
Adherents	3	0	3	0	4	4
Children	5	0	0	0	0	8
Visitors	9	0	4	0	0	8
Total	42	10	33	7	30	48

*** Does not include events such as the trip to trainee Minister's induction at Kettering.

Appendix B: Knowle United Reformed Church Accounts

Year ended 31 December 2010

Income and Expenditure Account

	2010	2009
Income		
	£	£
Weekly offerings	13,095	13,655
Gift Aid Tax recovered	3,757	3,748
Hall Lettings	7,612	7,755
Interest received	176	171
Donations to cost of Magazine	385	427
General Donations	190	159
Fund Raising	1,859	2,343
Traid craft	0	50
Miscellaneous Income	187	71
Total Income	27,260	28,379
Expenditure		
Maintenance of Ministry Contribution	10,488	10,428
Contribution to Joint Ministry costs	1,051	1,073
Minister's expenses	476	419
Heating and Lighting	2,832	4,084
Pulpit Supply	905	890
Organists	1,075	1,185
Cleaning costs	1,714	1,606
Magazine costs	812	729
Worship expenses	126	308
Junior Church expenses	11	150
Insurance	770	756
General maintenance and repairs	2,162	1,764
Major Projects	3,680	4,884
Copyright Licence	170	0
Miscellaneous expenses	864	730
Total Expenditure	27,136	29,006
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	124	(627)

M B Robertson
Treasurer

Appendix C: Knowle United Reformed Church Accounts

Year ended 31 December 2010

Balance Sheet

	£
Balance on Deposit at Bank	28,826
Gift Aid recoverable from HMRC	3,022

Total Assets **£ 31,848**

represented by:

General Fund

	£	
at 31 Dec 2009	15,981	
Surplus of receipts over payments	<u>124</u>	
	16,105	
Less transfer to Heating replacement fund	<u>0</u>	
at 31 Dec 2010		£ 16,105

Charity Fund

at 31 Dec 2009 **£ 446**

Charitable Donations made

Communion envelopes	£ 654	Shelterbox	£ 500
Christmas collections	£ 923	Haiti Appeal	£ 250
Harvest tubes	£ 423	Indian Hospital	£ 1,100
Christmas Card	£ 65	CAB Solihull	£ 200
Gift aided donation	£ 500	St Basils	£ 50
Ebay project	£ 108	Pump Aid	£ 250
Social evening	£ 241	Maya Children's Trust	£ 250
Gift aid recovered	<u>£ 483</u>		
	<u>£ 3,843</u>		<u>£ 2,600</u>

at 31 Dec 2010 **£ 1,243**

Heating Replacement Reserve

	£
at 31 Dec 2009	14,500
Transfer from General Fund	<u>0</u>
at 31 Dec 2010	£ 14,500

Total Funds **£ 31,848**

M & P Robertson
Treasurer