

# **Bilton Grange**

**United Reformed Church**



*The*  
**United  
Reformed  
Church**

# **2026 Profile**



## MISSION STATEMENT

Bilton Grange United Reformed Church believes that our mission is to attempt to follow the Great Commission as laid down by Jesus in Mathew chapter 28 verses 18-20.

*“Then Jesus came to them and said All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I will be with you always, to the end of time.”*

We do this by seeking opportunities to serve the local community and by helping our membership of all ages to grow in spirituality through good preaching, home group discussion, and bible study, thus enabling, us to seek and strengthen fellowship between us.



Our understanding of mission is based upon the life, death and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord. The aim of mission is to share the good news of Jesus Christ through showing His love to all who we meet, so that others will come to know him as their Lord and Saviour. We develop our understanding of mission with a broad stroke, to show the love of Christ in all we do.

## BILTON AREA

Situated in the north side of Harrogate, Bilton has a strong sense of identity within the Harrogate District.

Bilton has easy access to the town centre, adjoining the open countryside to the north.

The population of Bilton is approximately 6,000 and the area has seen significant growth in recent years; this has mainly been in residential housing. The community continues growing with new developments.

Bilton has a strong community spirit and is served by many local organisations including Bilton Health and Wellbeing Hub, Bilton Community Centre, Dene Park Community Centre and a volunteer run library. There are also two primary schools within the Bilton Area and there



is to be a school for SEN and disabilities opening very soon. A recent survey suggests that the Woodfield area is the second poorest in Harrogate.

Bilton Grange United Reformed Church has input into the local schools through assemblies during term time; the local clergy work together to integrate with the schools.

We are aware of the need to work and extend the Kingdom of God outside our usual congregation and beyond the Church boundaries, therefore some of our activities are planned to serve both our own members and those in the community. We also hold various successful fund-raising events with support from the local community, raising funds for both the church and the charities we support.

### **THE PASTORATE**

Bilton Grange URC is in a joint pastorate with Knaresborough URC and the Synod. The pastorate shares are 37 ½% Bilton; 37 ½% Knaresborough and 25% Synod.

In our desire to share the gospel with people in the community, Bilton Grange continues to seek different ways to engage with non-church people by organising regular groups that attract those outside our normal worshipping community.

We have a small music group which enhances our services and they are also used in events which draw in the community.

### **ECUMENICAL SCENE**

There is a good working relationship between the local clergy who meet for prayer and support regularly. Bilton Grange share with the other churches to conduct assemblies in the local schools.

### **LINKS WITH THE COMMUNITY**

- Very large and successful Shoe Box appeal
- Social Events
  - o Annual Quiz night with pie and pea supper
  - o Film night bi-monthly
  - o Beetle Drive
- Social group – meets twice a month again attended by many from the community.



- SEN group meets once a month to allow parents/carers time to engage with each other while their children play in a safe and caring environment.
- Hedge Ministry – our passionate knitters knit Christmas Angels, Easter Chicks, Harvest fruit and veg with labels on telling people these are a free gift from the church to bring them the love of Jesus. These are put on our hedges for the community at different times of the year.
- Summer and Christmas Fairs.



All the above are open to the community, and we have a wide number who enjoy joining us on these occasions.

The hall is hired out to various community groups, WW, (previous weight watchers) Weigh Better Together, a drama/singing group, an exercise class for wellbeing, children's parties, a Rainbows group etc.

Bilton Grange along with Knaresborough URC is part of the local Mission and Care group in which we share with St Paul's and West Park in Harrogate. Dacre, Otley, Burley in Wharfedale and York. We meet together, pray and plan and have a yearly United service and Christmas meal.

Bilton Grange feels that God is calling us to be a presence in the community that surrounds us. To do this we are working to grow our church numerically and spiritually and to engage with the community by sharing the love of Jesus.

The vision is to rediscover and use to the full, our resources in Christ, so that we can be a blessing to our fellow citizens and show those around us that Christianity is very relevant in the 21st century.



## **LOCAL CHURCH LIFE**

- Number of members - **28**
- Members joined in the last five years - **11**
- Number of Adherents - **17**
- Frequency of church meetings – four times a year
- Average attendance at church meetings - **20**
- Number of serving elders – **4**
- Number of non-serving elders - **7**
- Frequency of elders’ meetings - bi-monthly
- Approximate age profile of members/children
  - o Under 5    1
  - o 5-11    4
  - o 11-15    3
  - o 16-18    0
  - o 18-25    0
  - o 26-60    11
  - o 61-80    13
  - o Over 80    4



The church buildings are well maintained and have been upgraded in the last five years with a new kitchen, and carpark, which has recently been resurfaced. The buildings have also been redecorated. There is always an ongoing list of jobs to do but this is constantly updated.

The church has a Safeguarding Officer and a DBS Verifier and all those who work with children or vulnerable adults have their DBS kept updated.

## **POLICIES IN PLACE**

- o Fire drill is carried out annually
- o A risk assessment is in place and all those hiring our buildings are asked to do their own risk assessment.
- o We have 5-6 people who have undertaken the hygiene certificate
- o Several of our members have attended a first aid demonstration to understand how to deal with a cardiac arrest. There is a defibrillator on the wall of the building adjacent to ours. A first aid box and accident book are kept in the kitchen.

## **THE CHURCH**

Bilton Grange United Reformed Church was established on 15th March 1906, and services were held in temporary premises on Skipton Road, now the ‘Snooker Hall’. Fund raising began in earnest on 3rd November 1919 and a committee from Bilton Grange met a subcommittee of deacons from Victoria Avenue, (now West Park URC), to discuss the building scheme. Plans for a new building were made in April 1926 and adopted in January 1928. The foundation stone was laid on 19th March 1928, and the present church building was opened on 11th October by Mrs Hanford of Victoria Avenue Church.

## MISSION AND VISION

Our understanding of mission is based upon the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord. The aim of mission is to share the good news of Jesus so that others will come to know him as their Lord and Saviour.

Firstly, our mission is seen in the Sunday-by-Sunday proclamation of the Gospel to those in our fellowship. In this mission, we are hopefully building up our Christian faith and love of our Saviour, which we pray leads to sharing Him in the community. We have a motto on our door that says, 'Enter to worship and leave to serve'. This is what we try to encourage people to do. Our worship services seek to be relevant to those who regularly attend and to those who come seeking.

Secondly, we aim to encourage more people to attend our Fellowship Group and Bible Studies. We hold prayer meetings on an 'ad hoc' basis but unfortunately these are not well attended. In the Fellowship Group and Bible study group prayers are always said; we also have a Prayer WhatsApp group which is used to send prayer requests out.

Thirdly, we seek to take the good news of Jesus to the community in the groups, Monday Fellowship, Social group, film nights and other events throughout the year where people who are not our regular worshippers are welcomed to be a part of us. We aim to provide a safe place of welcome.

Fourthly, our mission is seen in providing for those less fortunate than ourselves. We support three charities a year financially as well as joining in the shoe box appeal, and in encouraging people to make donations in boxes at the back of church that are given to the Harrogate Homeless Project and the Food Bank. We seek to spread the love of God locally and internationally.



## TYPES OF WORSHIP

Worship commences at 10am on a Sunday. During the service our junior church go out after approximately the first twenty minutes to have their own group.

We have a small band of guitar players and a keyboard player who lead our music which is mostly taken from Mission Praise. However, the music group will practice any other hymns/choruses/songs

if given enough notice. We project all our hymns/choruses onto an overhead screen.

We also have a small Zoom congregation who join us regularly from Poland, Leeds West Yorkshire, and Wales as well as from wider afield.

We have an average Sunday congregation of 30-35 people. We run a junior church throughout the year except in August when all our church services are 'All age'.

Our worship is Bible led but also informal 'middle of the road' evangelical and relaxed.

The pew bibles are NIV.

At present the pulpit is supplied by retired ministers and lay people.

Tuesday Fellowship Group – meets weekly. It includes praise, worship and prayer and is a valuable addition to our church life enabling personal spiritual growth and promotes fellowship in the body. The group includes discussions about ethics, the bible and everyday events and is led by its own members.

There is a mid-week Bible study which is led by one of our members.

Currently, there are no mid-week services, but we would be open to these if a new minister offered them.

Holy Communion is celebrated on 2nd Sunday of each month.

Our baptismal policy is both infant and believers' baptism.

We have a variety of special services such as Christingle, Candlelight Carol, Harvest, and Remembrance services. We have also held and would be open to holding in the future, 'back to church Sunday' plus other particular Sunday services.



## What are our strengths and weaknesses?

### STRENGTHS?

Our strength is observed in the congregation's commitment to Christ and our desire to be a loving, welcoming church to all who attend regularly or occasionally as well as to those seeking Christ. Our strength is also our shared discussion on all topics and a willingness to move forward and try new things.

We have a mission intentions morning every two years to discern where we believe God is leading us on our journey of mission.

From a small congregation, 7-8 people have answered the call to ordained ministry and gone on to serve in other congregations. We are a sending church.

Several of our members have served on Synod and national committees.

### WEAKNESSES?

We have a limited number of people who carry a lot of the work to see our commitment through, although a lot of willingness to do so, our age profile hinders this.

For all the majority put efforts into the local mission scene, our ecumenical vision needs more work.

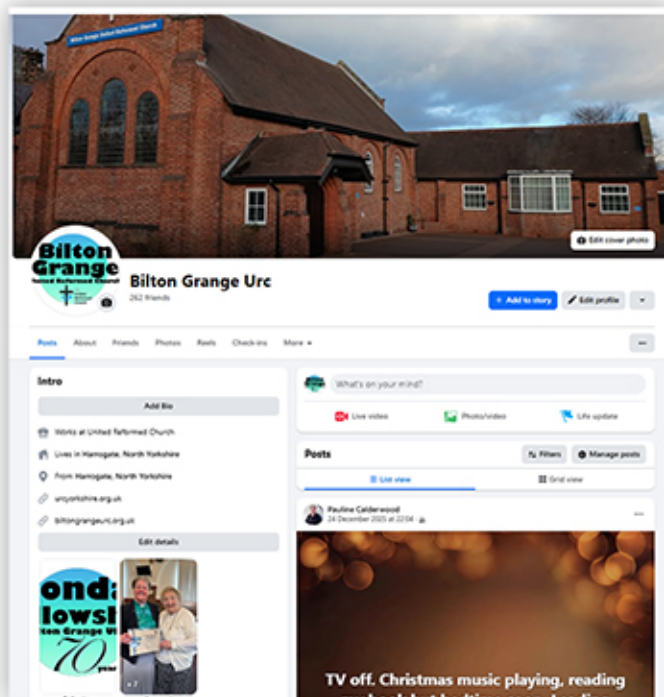
## What are our opportunities and challenges?

The church is situated within a residential area and one of our challenges is and continues to be how we can engage with the people who live around us, many of the residents have problems with mental health etc.

We would like to invite those around us to other events and build friendships with them, to show them the love of Jesus in practical ways. One of our challenges is how we do this.

The church has a website another challenge is to use this more, to be our shop window along with other social media platforms.

We do have a Facebook page but not many of our members engage with it. We need to build confidence into our members to use social media more.



## What is your vision for the future?

Our local church vision for the future is to grow in love and the grace of God and to attract more people to share in our mission to the local community.

## Why do we need a minister?

We need a minister to help us in our mission by developing gifts and talents among us.

We are seeking a minister with good leadership qualities, a person with a pastoral heart, and one who will be a visible presence among us.

We would look for a minister who would be a team player, who would value the gifts that are already among us and develop gifts in others.

Our ideal person is one who can communicate with all ages.

We acknowledge that one person cannot do everything, and we are willing to work with a new minister who brings new vision and inspiration to us.

We need a minister to be present in the community around us.

The minister would become an integral part of the local clergy group, therefore, engaging us more in the ecumenical scene.

