

Parish Profile for Stroud Christian Fellowship

stroudchristianfellowship



Summary

Welcome to Stroud Christian Fellowship – a church family looking to the future.

We are an evangelical, charismatic church with a vision to see the communities of Stroud experience the unconditional love of Jesus Christ.

After many years of faithful leadership from our current Pastor, we are now prayerfully seeking the man God is calling to lead us into the next season of church life. This is an exciting moment in our history. Alongside this leadership transition, we recently moved to a new Sunday meeting venue, opening fresh opportunities for mission, community engagement and growth.

We are looking for a Bible believing leader who loves Jesus, values people, embraces the work of the Holy Spirit and will help us continue to build a church that is both rooted in scripture and engaged with the world around us.

The following pages give some background to Stroud Christian Fellowship and the community we serve. The intention is to give prospective applicants for the role of Pastor a snapshot of Stroud, our church and the type of person we are looking for to build on the past and lead us into the future.

Stroud is a wonderful place to live and work in, and we have a caring, committed church family involved in many areas of the local community.

Are you interested? If you need any more information, please contact:
Richard Morris (our Chair of Trustees) richard@stroudcf.org

About Stroud



In 2021 The Sunday Times named Stroud 'The Best Place to Live in the UK'.

Stroud is nestled in the Cotswolds at the meeting point of five valleys. Stroud is known for its beauty and dramatic hills. The area provides immediate access to over 3,000 miles of public footpaths, making it perfect for walking, cycling, and enjoying the natural landscape. The 'Commons' are one of the best places to walk, relax, get an ice cream (from our own ice cream factory), find a pub, watch the sunset or to simply sit and pray!

The town is known for its spirited, creative, and alternative community. It is packed with independent bookshops, organic cafes, vibrant cultural venues and a dynamic music scene. Away from the town in local villages there are a plethora of excellent local pubs and eating establishments.

Stroud hosts one of the largest and most acclaimed and award-winning farmers' markets in the UK, held every Saturday. Dubbed the "Covent Garden of the Cotswolds," it offers incredible local artisan produce.

Stroud offers practical links to major cities. The train station connects directly to London Paddington in roughly 90 minutes, and the M5 allows easy access to Bristol and Birmingham, with both Gloucester & Cheltenham easily accessible by road or public transport.



The area is a massive draw for families, offering several Ofsted-rated "Outstanding" schools. There are plenty of smaller primary schools, Comprehensive and Grammar Schools (Boys and Girls) as well as Stroud College.

In April 2026, The Telegraph highlighted Stroud as one of the 'Top Ten Towns in the UK Where People Live Longest'

Stroud is a tight-knit and vibrant town with a strong community feel, a place where strangers feel like friends very quickly. It is a great place to live and work.

The Broader Context



Population Breakdown

Stroud (Parish/Town):
13,500 people
(as of the 2021 Census)

Stroud (Built-up Area):
~26,560 people

Stroud District:
~125,700 people

The wider Stroud District is mostly rural, covering 175 square miles and includes other main settlements like Dursley, Stonehouse, and Nailsworth. The town of Stroud itself serves as the largest commercial and cultural centre for the district.

Key Demographic Data from 2021 Census

Stroud District is highlighted as having a growing but increasingly older population with highly qualified residents.

Population

- Around 23% of residents are aged over 65.
- Approximately 21% are aged under 20.
- The district has a growing older population while continuing to attract families and professionals.

Education

- Over 41% of adults hold degree-level qualifications or above.
- Qualification levels are significantly above the national average.

Community

- Home ownership rates are high.
- Residents report generally good health and strong levels of community engagement.
- While predominantly White British, the area has seen significant growth in ethnic diversity over the last decade.

The culture of Stroud can be independent-minded, creative and sometimes sceptical of organised religion. At the same time, there is a strong concern for social justice, the environment and community wellbeing. We believe these characteristics create significant opportunities for Christian witness and service.

About Us...

Our Story

Stroud Christian Fellowship (SCF) was founded in 1981, with a number of people following the Rev. Jim Baker out of the Stroud Baptist Church in response to a significant move of the Holy Spirit to form a new congregation.

Jim and others locally connected to Steve Thomas who was leading Witney Community Church in the early 1980s which established our long-term relationship with Oxfordshire Community Churches and Salt & Light Ministries (now called Salt & Light Advance in the UK).

We have had 4 Church Pastors since being formed, including Martin Pearson who has served in the role for the last 27 years.

We have met on Sundays in a variety of locations over the years ranging from a dilapidated old terrapin building, the local Stroud Subscription Rooms, a number of local schools and most recently for the last few years sharing the Citadel with the Stroud Salvation Army. In August we moved to a new home at a local Primary School in the middle of a large housing estate. This will offer significant evangelistic/mission opportunities as well as more space to meet and a car park right next to the school – luxury!

The Family Today

We are a friendly intergenerational congregation of around 75 people from all walks of life. With all ages represented (although with an aging bias!)

Our worship is contemporary with modern songs and the occasional traditional hymn led by our excellent Worship teams. We have a variety of speakers from Sunday to Sunday. We encourage the use of the spiritual gifts within our worship and people are very happy to participate with prayer and thanksgiving. With an evangelical / charismatic ethos, we see ourselves as having a strong 'family' identity with all ages represented, including children and young families. It is very much part of our "DNA".

We have a strong commitment to Stroud and a number of us are involved with social concerns and inter-church projects in the Stroud area.

We are a family on a mission to see God's Kingdom extended, serving the local community by bringing God's love, hope and freedom through the transforming message of Jesus Christ.

We are part of the family of churches that is Salt & Light Advance, members of the Evangelical Alliance, and part of Churches Together in Stroud. We support local Christian charities Sportily and The Door, as well as overseas mission work in the Philippines and Nepal.

Apart from Sundays, we have regular Wednesday evenings together, either for Bible Courses, Worship or Prayer and on Friday mornings the Prayer Warriors gather at 7:00am

In the past we ran Alpha courses, marriage courses, a Pregnancy Crisis Centre, a toddler and carer's café, CAP Centre, Kid Klub and larger scale evangelistic events together with the wider church in Stroud.

There are long-term historical links with Oxfordshire Community Churches – and a significant proportion of the congregation will travel to Oxford for Celebrations. Organising minibuses has helped with this, and helps foster the sense that we are part of something bigger.

Leadership, Governance and Resources

SCF is a charity and a company limited by guarantee, and has separate legal, financial and safeguarding status to that of Salt & Light Advance Churches, but has a close relationship and receives apostolic oversight and training from the Salt & Light Advance team as well as participating in events, celebrations and other programmes.

We currently have two elders leading a small, but experienced, skilled and competent church leadership team of 6, which we are looking to strengthen. We employ a part-time Treasurer and have a highly proficient, experienced and capable team of trustees who look after our finance structures, governance and safeguarding. Additionally, we have excellent teams in place, responsible for Children's Work, Hospitality, PA, Welcome and Worship.

Our Church Offices are at 'The Cross' – a short walk from Stroud town centre - and here we have one larger room (max 50 people comfortably), a Prayer Room with sofas (max 12 people), three offices and a kitchen and storage. This is a multi-use space used for everything from prayer meetings, Alpha and youth work, to craft workshops and video evenings. We would love to see the space used more than it currently is.

We have good relationships with the local church leaders and church community and are active members of Churches Together in Stroud – additionally our current church Pastor meets with various local church leaders for coffee, prayer and catch up on a regular basis.



The Opportunity

We believe that this is a particularly significant moment in the life of SCF.

The incoming Pastor will inherit:

- A church with a long history and clear identity
- Strong governance and safeguarding structures.
- Faithful and committed volunteers.
- Positive relationships with local churches.
- Strong connections with and support from Salt & Light Advance.
- A respected reputation within the community.
- A new Sunday venue, offering fresh outreach opportunities.

We are not looking for someone to only maintain what already exists.

We are seeking someone who will prayerfully lead us to discern God's direction for the future and equip the whole church family to play its part in extending God's kingdom.

The Person We Are Seeking

We are looking for someone who:

Loves Jesus

Demonstrates a mature Christian faith and a vibrant personal walk with God.

Leads through Relationship

Builds trust, develops others and works collaboratively with elders, trustees and ministry leaders.

Teaches God's Word

A Bible believer who can communicate scripture clearly, faithfully and accessibly.

Values and Seeks the Holy Spirit

Encourages prayer, spiritual gifts and dependence upon God.

Has a Heart for Mission

Is passionate about reaching those who do not yet know Christ and helping the church engage effectively with its community.

Develops Leaders

Recognises and releases gifts in others, helping people grow into their calling.

Loves People

Shows pastoral sensitivity, compassion and wisdom across all generations.

Values relationships

Is comfortable with and will advance our relationships with Salt & Light Advance and the wider local church community.

Our Prayer

We believe that God has been faithful to Stroud Christian Fellowship throughout our history, and that He will continue to be faithful in our new season.

Our prayer is that we will be a church family that knows Jesus deeply, loves one another well, and helps the communities of Stroud and beyond to experience the unconditional love of Christ and come to know Him personally.

We look forward to meeting the man God is calling to join us in that journey.