

If you turn towards the main door of the church and walk down the left-hand aisle, you will pass our newest feature: a digital organ.

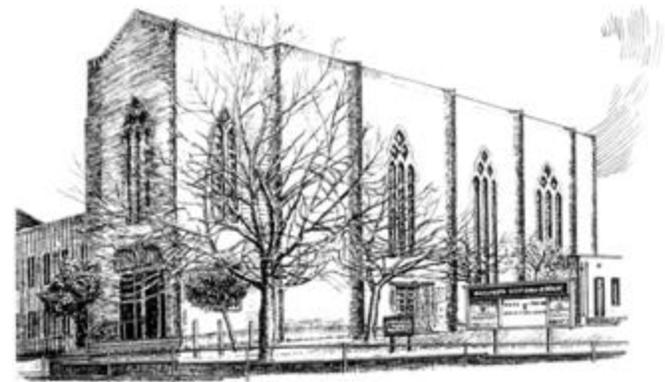
In 2005, due to the advanced age of our old pipe organ and the prohibitive cost of refurbishment, the decision was made to invest in a brand new organ which took advantage of modern technology. At the same time we took the decision to move the organ console to its present position, rather than 'hide' the organist away behind the pulpit where the old console can still be seen. It is a fine instrument, very fit for recital use as well as for leading Sunday worship.

A little further down the left-hand aisle you will find our Memorial Window. This was put in following the Second World War in memory of the members and friends of Sutton Baptist church who died in that conflict. You can see their names on the plaque beneath the window – names often read out on Remembrance Sunday.

The window illustrates the verse from the Book of Revelation that God will “wipe every tear from their eyes (and) death will be no more”. In the detail you can see the dead entering into the presence of God. If you look closely you can see that many of the figures are the soldiers, airmen, pilots and women who gave their lives in the conflict.

Sutton Baptist Church has many other interesting features – please speak to the minister or one of the stewards if you require any further help or information. We are terrifically proud of our beautiful church and will be happy to explain it to you.

Sutton Baptist Church



A Self- guided Tour

Welcome to

Welcome to Sutton Baptist Church!

The building in which you are now standing was erected in 1934 to meet the needs of the Baptists of Sutton. An earlier Baptist church was on Sutton High Street, exactly where Waterstones Bookshop is now. However, that church was getting rather old so the decision was made to build a brand new church on the present site.

The new church was designed by the architect Nugent Cachemaille-Day (1896-1976) mainly using traditional materials, such as brick and tile, in a style influenced by the Arts and Crafts Movement. Although Cachemaille-Day became best known for his church designs, he also built theatres – notice how the central aisle has a slight slope to it: very unusual in a church!

The church only took a little over six months to build, commencing in January 1934, and opening in September the same year, and its design caused a sensation not only locally, but in church and architectural circles nationwide.

Sutton Baptist Church is one of the best examples of a contemporary brick building in the Borough. The bold design has imposing proportions with long walls and concave sweeps in the 'moderne' style, which became popular in Europe in the 1920s and 1930s. Externally the sole decorative features on the plain red brick façade are panels of roof tiles laid end-on. The windows are also in simple clean lines, in a simplified Gothic style.

The interior is equally dramatic, with much exposed brickwork and pure lime plaster as the only decoration. The sweeping pointed arches are highlighted by the directions in which the bricks are laid, and its clean simplicity is in tune with the ideals of the Arts and Crafts Movement as well as the later modern architectural movements where form follows function.

If you wander right to the front of the church (where the high altar would be in an Anglican or Catholic church) you will see two important features.

First, look at the large stained glass window above you. We call it "The Bunyan Window" because it depicts scenes from 'A Pilgrim's Progress' by John Bunyan. This book is one of the most famous works in English literature and describes the spiritual journey of the main character, Christian, from his first awakenings of faith to his final destination at the Celestial City. Although Christian is a fictional character, he really stands for all of us on our road to spiritual discovery.

If you are not familiar with the book, please use the special leaflet we have prepared which explains the various scenes depicted.

Immediately below the window is our 'Baptistry'. Baptists are so-called because we prefer not to baptise people until they are old enough to decide for themselves if that is what they want. Baptism is 'full-immersion' – the person is plunged entirely beneath the water! The baptistry is shaped like a bath to symbolise the washing away of sins or like a grave to symbolise the death of the old life and the resurrection to new life. Even non-baptists usually find a service of believer's baptism to be a very moving experience.

Decorating the baptistry is a concrete sculpture depicting a story from the Bible. According to the story, the Apostle Philip was travelling when he came across an Ethiopian official reading the Old Testament in his chariot.

Philip explained to him about Jesus and answered his questions, whereupon the Ethiopian decided there and then to be baptised in some handy water. He is regarded as the very first African Christian. Nobody knows for certain who created the sculpture - we would love to know!