Matlock is a former Spa town situated on the southern edge of the Peak District with easy access to the M1 motorway. The population is increasing through new house building and currently stands at around 12,000 with a slight weighting towards older age groups. The town offers good local amenities, including well established schools.

Steep Turnpike Evangelical Church began meeting in the town in the ‘open brethren’ pattern around 1945, spearheaded by two general practitioners, Dr Richard Dobson and Dr William Logan. Meetings were held initially in the St John ambulance hut until the present building was opened in 1958. A substantial building project was completed in December 2024 to upgrade certain facilities and provide a more accessible resource for community based evangelistic activity. Much of the work involved in this project has been undertaken by church members.

Although there has been no fundamental change in the church’s stand on Biblical truth over the years, the pattern of services and general ethos have evolved to be more in line with other evangelical churches in the area, with whom we enjoy good fellowship. The church joined the Midlands Gospel Partnership in 2018 and affiliated to the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches in March 2022. Both of these have proved to be positive developments for the church.

The church membership has remained stable at around 40 for a number of years, although there have been many changes in personnel. The age profile of the church has also changed with the majority of church members now retired from regular employment, but many remaining fit and active. These changes have also impacted the focus of church activities with a previous heavy emphasis on children’s and youth work giving way to a number of adult orientated ministries. A thriving weekly activity for over 60s entitled EPIC (equipping people in Christ) has led to a number of interested attendees taking part in a study series similar to Christianity Explored.

Having been registered with the Charity Commission for some years, on 1 April 2024 the church became a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) with a new constitution and church handbook lodged with the commission and available for perusal. The existing 5 elders now also function as the trustees of the organisation. The church also has an ‘admin team’ which the elders attend in rotation and deals with routine practical issues.

As well as our two Sunday services we run home Bible study groups on alternate weeks with a church prayer meeting the other weeks. We also run a monthly lunch club (‘Stroll Inn’) with an inquirers’ Bible study prior to the lunch event. We make provision for running Sunday Club activities during the main Sunday service although the demand for this is extremely variable. We also run specific evangelistic events from time to time, for example afternoon teas for ladies or breakfasts for men.

At present the Bible teaching is planned and delivered by some of the elders and one or two others in the church, with around 40% of our morning services being taken by visiting preachers. Pastoral work is handled in a fairly informal way by the elders, supported by our wives.

Looking to the future we view the appointment of a pastor as the next stage in the life of our church fellowship as we seek to grow and reach others for Christ. At the present time the church is not able to support a pastor to work full-time but we trust and pray that this will become feasible over the next 3-5 years. For the present the commitment is likely to be the equivalent of 3 or 4 days a week and would suit a candidate who is able to embrace a bi-vocational model of employment. Further details are available in the Job Description.