

# TORQUAY

## Plymouth Brethren

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The Brethren started off in about 1829. They first met in Torquay in an upstairs room in Temperance Street when this became too small for the gatherings a new Meeting House in Warren Road was built and opened in 1852.

They also used a meeting room in Torre Hill Road directly opposite the Zion chapel.

The Brethren held some Meetings in the former school building in Rock Road, and in 1892 swapped premises with the Unitarian Church who had held meetings at rooms at Bannercross Steps and Albert Steps, both of these being the result of separating due to a dispute.

The Warren Road building is now used by a local auctioneer, the rooms at Bannercross steps have long since disappeared. I have been unable to locate which rooms were used at Albert Steps. The building at Torre Hill is now used by a fitness club.



In Fore Street, St Marychurch used to stand a small Gospel chapel. This is the chapel which the renowned Philip Gosse built. Edmund Gosse reports in his book "Father & Son" that Sundays in the mid 1800s comprised of a 3 separate services including a 2 hour morning service and a prayer meeting.

Philip Gosse is reported to have arrived in St Marychurch in 1852 and lived at Bank Cottage in Park Road between January and April of that year . On 21st September 1867, he moved to Sandhurst in what was then Torquay Road (now St Marychurch Road). For a time Gosse carried out full immersion baptisms on Oddicombe Beach until the adverse reactions of the locals forced him to abandon the practise- but when he built the "Gospel Hall" he incorporated a full immersion bath. When Philip Gosse died the ownership of the Chapel passed to his son who later sold it to the congregation. The chapel was demolished and two shops built on the site.

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At various times meetings have also been held at Kingsway Hall in Babbacombe (formerly a Wesleyan chapel)



and a hall in behind 32, Princes Road in Ellacombe, which is now used by a martial arts club.



The Hebron Hall in Barton Hill Way is still used by the Brethren- it looks like a temporary building but it has stood since at least the 1960s and possibly considerably earlier

[Return to Church index](#)

[Return to front page](#)