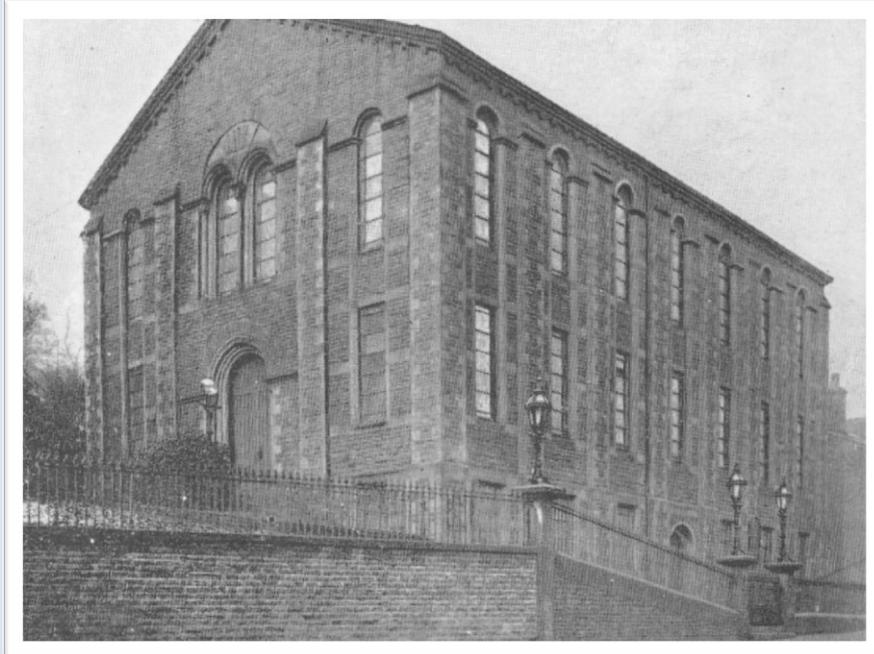


# Zion Baptist Chapel



At a church meeting in 1857 the building of a church and Sunday School at Zion were discussed, land in Market Street was bought. Work commenced, and on Good Friday the 2nd of April, 1858, the building was opened. The cost around £4,000. A collection taken during the opening services amounted to £508 The pastor was the Rev. Richard Stanlon, who stayed only one year from 1858. In 1861 the Rev. H. Hall started his ministry. This also happened to be the same year as the American Civil War. The effect on the cotton trade was devastating. Most of the Lancashire cotton towns were brought to the edge of starvation, and disease and death were commonplace. At the end of Mr Hall's ministry, which was also the end of the Civil War, there was total abject poverty.

Not surprisingly Mr Hall had to resign his ministry through ill health. In 1868 the Rev. David Davies was invited to the pastorate. By 1870 the Sunday School had prospered so well that the building was too small to accommodate all its scholars, so it was decided to build a branch school-chapel at Acre Mill. This building was opened on October 1871. For a long time officers and teachers of Zion regularly went to Acre Mill to help with the developing of the new church. By 1889 Acre Mill had become strong enough to ask to become a separate church, and this request was granted. Mr Davies ended his ministry at Zion in 1873.

Mr Davies was followed in 1875 by the Rev. C. W. Gregory, who stayed for four years. He was followed the same year by two men who joined at the pastorate, the Rev. J. Horn and the Rev. C. Chapman. Apparently they joined their labours by including Acre Mill, but after about two years they both left. The Rev E A Tydeman, who stayed for eight years, came in 1882. Already there was a

strong feeling that the Sunday School, which was the ground floor under the chapel, was inadequate, so it was decided that a plan should be drawn up for the building of a new Sunday School. After the departure of Mr Tydeman in 1890, Bacup became what today would be called a depressed area. Trade was bad Unemployment was high. The health of the townspeople was deplorable and the church suffered very badly. The Rev S. J.Baker was called as pastor. It is recorded that he performed excellent solid work not spectacular, but the church had benefited from his ministry when he left in 1895

A shock awaited the worshippers who came to service on the morning of 8th July 1945. With grave concern they viewed the broken coping stones which had fallen off the gable end at the front of the building. Services were held on the Sunday school. Ebenezer and Irwell Terrace both offered support by holding services in the churches. For over two years services were held in the Sunday school with joint services being held with Ebenezer and Irwell Terrace. After two years of discussion and conflicting reports, it was decided that the church could not be made usable and it was decided to demolish the building. A new gable end was built leaving the organ loft to form an extra room for the Sunday school along with the rooms underneath. On December 10th 1947 a special church meeting was held to consider an invitation from Irwell Terrace asking Zion to join with them in more regular Sunday services. The outcome was that six months later in June 1948, a unanimous decision was made that the two churches should unite and become one. From June 1948 Union Baptist came into being.

In June 1962 final arrangements were made for the joining together of Ebenezer and Union churches and it was approved that the new fellowship would be known as Trinity Baptist Church. With the inauguration services taking place on November 3rd 1962. The first minister was the Rev T.A.Roberts, who had come to the pastorate of Union earlier in the year.