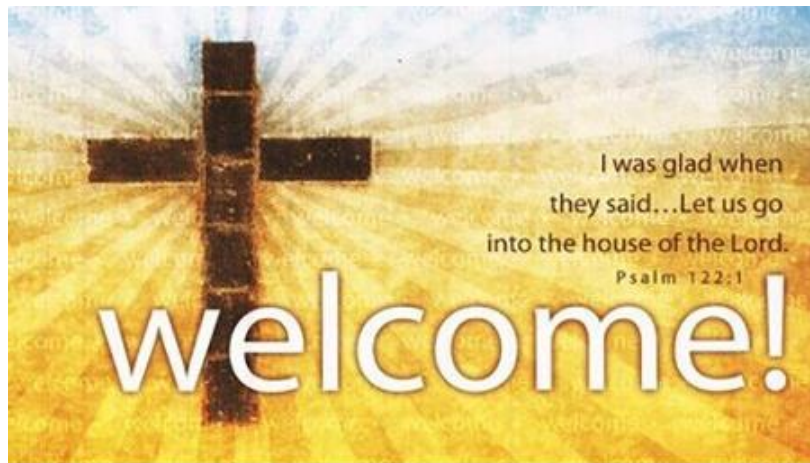


# BARROW UPON SOAR METHODIST CHURCH

North Street, Barrow upon Soar, Leicestershire



## ANNUAL REPORT 2023



### A WARM WELCOME AWAITS YOU AT OUR MEETINGS

<b>SUNDAY</b>	10.15 am	Morning Worship
<b>MONDAY</b>	9.15 am	Barrow Playgroup meets on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9.15 am – 3.25 pm and on Wednesdays from 9.15 am – 12.15 pm during term time. 1 <sup>st</sup> Barrow upon Soar Guides "New Horizons" – a friendship group for those who are bereaved
1 <sup>st</sup> in the month	7.00 pm 2.00 pm	
<b>TUESDAY</b> Every 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday	4.30 – 7.30 pm 7.30 pm	Cosmic Theatre Schools Men's Supper Group
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> Alternate weeks Every 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed Every 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed Every 4 <sup>th</sup> Wed	7.30 pm 2.30 pm 7.00 pm 3.15 – 4.30 pm	Ladies Circle Cuppa and Chatta Gardening Club Fun@Church for children & their parents/carers
<b>THURSDAY</b> Alternate weeks	6.30 – 9.30 pm 7.30 pm	Barrow Arts Theatre Society Bible Study – see notices
<b>SATURDAY</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> in the month 3 <sup>rd</sup> in the month	10.00-11.00 am 2.00-4.00 pm	Minimarket & Coffee Morning Crochet & Craft

Please see Circuit Plan, notices or website for details of Holy Communion services & other events

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR MINISTER, REV SANDRA MARSHALL

Dear Friends,

It is good to see that things are beginning to pick up following Lockdown and the continued effects of Covid.

Over the year we have enjoyed a variety of worship and some very good Local Arrangements arranged by the stewards. Some of the highlights have been the two baptism services at which 3 people were baptised. It is good to see that these families are joining us for worship too.



Another highlight was the Queen's Platinum Jubilee weekend which saw visitors from the village and the Circuit who enjoyed tea and cakes and fellowship.

The decorated Bollards have been excellent this year and, as well as seasonal knits and decorations, we have had lovely Jubilee and Coronation decorations. These have drawn much attention and encouraged some people to step inside church!

I am grateful for all those who have worked hard running our Church based events which have continued successfully – Men's Supper Group, Cuppa and Chat, Fun @ Church, Ladies Circle, New Horizons, Bible Study, Crochet and Craft Group, Mini-Mart and the Christmas Fayre.

We have continued the pattern of Churches Together in Barrow events beginning with the Remembrance Day service and parade at Holy Trinity, the Advent Service here, the Week of Prayer meetings and service at the Baptist Church and the Lent Lunches and Good Friday service here. Lent lunches were very successful this year and raised a large amount for two local charities supporting the homeless and people with mental health problems.

I am grateful to have a good team of Stewards who work very hard to ensure worship goes smoothly and offer good leadership to the Church. Two of our stewards, Heather and Sandra are due to retire and we are looking for replacements. Maybe God is calling you? I am very thankful for the stewards who offer all their "varied gifts and arts."

Also during the year we have met with Matt Forsyth, the District Mission Enabler to talk about how we can go forward as a church. His report was very encouraging. We are currently talking with the Circuit about whether there is a possibility of employing a children and young people's worker who could share their time between several churches – one being us! It is felt that some help developing Fun @ Church links and links with the Pre-school would be good.

Most recently we have celebrated the Coronation.

I feel we have had a good year. Thank you to everyone who has served us well with their skills, time and gifts.

Looking to the future: Churches Together is planning to do some things a bit differently next. Watch this space! We are perhaps going to re-think some Christmas services and look forward to sharing God's love within and without.

Thank you all for the part you play in the life of the Church.

Rev Sandra Marshall

## STEWARDS' REPORT

The 'enabling' of Sunday worship to take place is probably the aspect of stewarding that is most familiar to people. This involves contacting the preacher the week before the service, passing their order of service on to Natalie or whoever will be operating the AV system, and finding readers for the lessons if required. It also involves arriving early on Sunday morning to open up the premises and have everything ready and welcoming for the congregation, and to greet the preacher on arrival and attend to their needs. We are also 'on duty' for the whole of the service, watching out for any situation that might occur, and need to stay behind afterwards to make sure everything is in order before locking up when everyone has left.

In addition to the Sunday duties we also meet together with the minister every three months or so to discuss the life and ministry of the church, and as your representatives we would be glad to hear from you if you have any particular issues you would like us to consider. We are also members of the Church Council and responsible for implementing any decisions made at the meetings.

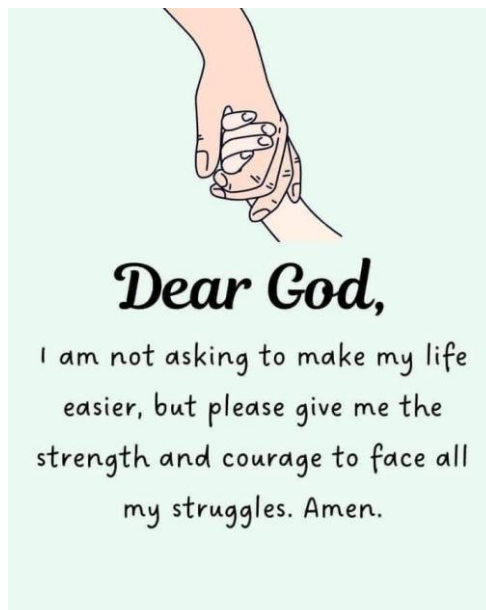
One duty that we had never expected to have was the regular planning of Local Arrangement services when no preacher is available. It is something that we have always had to be prepared to do in an emergency but not on such a regular basis, so we are very grateful for the amount of online and printed material available, and especially for The Vine complete services which can be downloaded and adapted to suit our requirements. We work together to plan these services and generally try to make them a different type of service, rather than just a 'normal' service without a preacher, so they are usually more informal with the chairs grouped around the coffee tables, and sometimes we take our tea and coffee in with us at the start. Most people seem comfortable with this arrangement and we are grateful for the amount of encouragement received.

Teamwork is an important part of stewarding, and we really do need more people to join the team. We all have different gifts and abilities and accept that not everyone is able to do everything, so don't be put

off if there are aspects of stewarding that you don't feel comfortable with. Please just have a word with one of us or with Rev Sandra to see what is involved, and then prayerfully consider if this might be a way in which you could serve the church.

Your stewards this year have been Sandra Webb, Heather Doda, Kate Morley and Natalie Thompson, and on your behalf I would like to thank them for their hard work during the year. I would also like to thank Natalie and Peter for operating the AV system, Janet for doing such a brilliant job with administration, and all those who help to enhance our worship by giving a warm welcome to people on arrival, providing and arranging flowers, preparing communion, making tea and coffee, or just 'mucking in' to do whatever they see needs doing. Thank you all.

Sandra Webb





The Prayer Chain is an important part of the ministry of the church, available for anyone who feels in need of extra prayer at any time.

This might be because of an emergency when prayer is needed immediately and can't wait until the Sunday prayer list, or it might be for something more personal such as if you are feeling low or anxious and would just like some extra support. Just tell one of us that you have a request for the prayer chain, and we will immediately pass it around the chain so that we can all hold the situation in prayer.

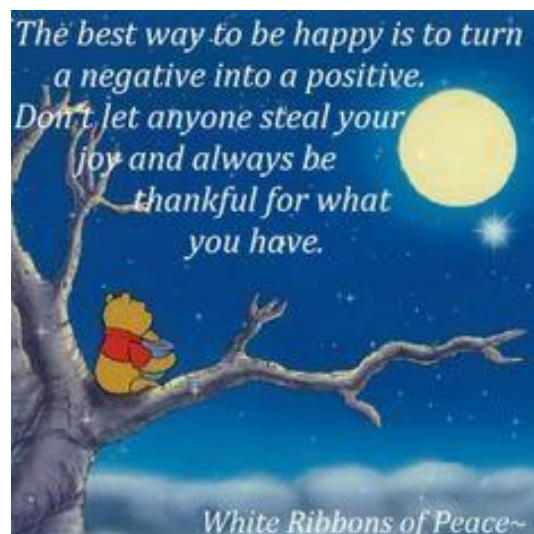
Any request that comes to us is treated as confidential unless we are told otherwise, and we don't need to know all the details – just share as much or as little information as you are comfortable with.

If prayer is important to you and you feel you might like to become a part of this ministry, please have a word with me or Heather and we will explain what is involved.

Sandra Webb



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# BARROW UPON SOAR SHOW



AN OPEN SHOW FOR ALL AGES:  
Vegetables- Fruit – Flowers – Baking -Preserves –  
Photography – Knitting – Crochet – Embroidery –  
Patchwork

What will YOU enter?

METHODIST CHURCH HALL

SATURDAY 16<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023

PUBLIC VIEWING: 2.30 – 4.00 pm

Refreshments available  
Schedule of classes available from Taylor's  
Florist, or ask Tilly or Janet



Two donkeys were walking in Jerusalem, when one donkey said to the other, "Just yesterday I was here carrying Jesus and the people were singing and shouting and throwing down their clothes for me to walk on, and today they don't even recognize me". The other donkey replied, "that's how it is my friend.....Without JESUS you are nothing

## CROCHET AND CRAFT



Everyone is welcome to attend our meetings. We have more regular members who are learning to knit, crochet, embroider and use a sewing machine for patchwork. You can hear laughter, chatting and deep concentration during the session with drinks and biscuits available to keep up our strength. Hopefully we will be able to put some of our efforts in the village show in September.

Tilly Yates

## CHURCH FLOWERS

Could YOU mark a special occasion or anniversary by donating flowers to decorate the Communion Table on Sundays? If you are wondering what happens after the service the flowers are taken out by Tilly to someone who is sick, bereaved or just in need of a hug and they are very much appreciated.

Thank you to everyone who has donated this past year and if anyone else would like to then please see Tilly. If anyone could help by taking out the flowers during holiday times it would be greatly appreciated.

If you know of a friend or neighbour in the village who you think would benefit from this gift then please let Tilly know.



Tilly Yates

## FUN @ CHURCH

We have a regular group of 15-20+ very lively children attending with their parents, grandparents and carers. Their ages range from babies to 12 years. This gives us a challenging task to prepare the session each month so that every child will be able to take away some of the teaching. We do aim to have "fun at church" and judging by their return visit each month we must be doing that. We pray that some of our teaching, songs (particularly action songs), prayers, craft activities, and games will be an inspiration for them. We are so pleased that Leo, 15 years and Niall, also at Secondary School, who have been regular attenders since they were quite small, are now part of our team, proving to be reliable and valuable helpers, particularly to Mike in the Lego Challenge section.



The October session was "It's all about Fishing?" We focussed on how God calls us to tell others all we know about Jesus. To illustrate the theme we made and painted a box of an under water scene, made and painted clay fish, crabs and rocks. We also placed in paper created fish which were swimming and fishing nets in which some had been caught. We left it on the tables at the back of the worship area for you to see and admire! We made "yummy fishing rods" from bread sticks, sweet red laces and jelly worm sweets. A "sea" with various Lego people "swimming" in it proved that it is not as easy to fish as you might think.

In November we brought Christmas early and made a host of decorations covered in glue and glitter, woolly sheep, angels, Mary, Joseph, and edible baby Jesus in a crispy crib. We sang Christmas songs and invited everyone to our Christmas Services and Celebrations at Church.

In January the theme was "Are you willing?" which dealt with "inclusion" using the story of Jesus healing people with leprosy. In our craft work we illustrated how we must show and recognise acts of kindness and include others who sometimes feel left out. We talked about our feelings and made happy and sad faced biscuits. The Lego model showed children playing together in the playground, co-operating, sharing and including everyone.

In the theme "Heavenly Hope" we looked at "The Beatitudes". We began our session with the children searching for the emojis we had placed on the walls of the Hall. They were very good at identifying the emotions. We talked about how they felt today and they drew emojis for two different emotions to illustrate their feelings. We talked about the word "Blessed" and the phrase "Bless You". The illustration using a tea bag and water in a glass clearly showed the infusion taking place, illustrating how blessings will spread. Our action song was "God is Good to Me". We particularly like this song when we sing, ...."He gave us lips to eat our chips. God is good to me". We illustrated "Blessed are the Meek" – those who show caring, by making flowers with a chocolate placed in the centre. These were made to give away. We asked for God's blessings for ourselves and others as we wrote prayers to go on the Prayer Tree. We made "BEE HOTELS" using the plastic bottles, which members of the congregation had kindly saved for us. These bottles were decorated then stuffed with canes, twigs and moss to create a good, safe habitat for the bees and other insects. These were taken home to be placed in a suitable spot in the garden. We discussed "Blessed are the merciful". We prepared a pot to grow our small crop of cress to take home. We talked about how the cress can add a different taste to the food and how knowing God makes a difference in the way some people think and try to live their life. The Lego builders thought of a time when they had been "blessed" and built their answer representing, "love" and "community".

In April our theme was "Creation - God's Wonderful World". Our Snack was "growing trees". We used cheese spread to stick bread sticks on the paper plate and created a growing tree using grapes for the fruit. This was then promptly eaten. After the story we sang the action song "He made the stars to shine" and "All things bright and beautiful". The craft activities, illustrating what God created, included a lot of cutting and gluing skills as we made

baskets of flowers, moving fish, walking caterpillars, feathery birds and fingerprint bugs and insects. The Lego builders made their version of Creation and placed it at the back of the Worship Area to be admired.

Please keep the children and their families in your prayers and the FUN@CHURCH team Janet, Heather, Katie, Mike, Kate, Leo and Niall.

We would enjoy more help as we never know how many children, parents, grandparents and carers will arrive. If you would like to have "fun at church" on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month, do have a word with one of the team.

Kate Morley



## YARN BOMBING

We have been yarn bombing again this year with Remembrance Day, Christmas and Easter marked in the usual way.

We celebrated the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022 with a regal display on the bollards and in the Display window which was much appreciated by our village friends.

We planned for the Coronation of King Charles III and decided upon the King, Queen Consort, Guardsmen x 2, Beefeater, Windsor Castle, and a silver Birch tree with delphiniums because they are the King's favourite flower! We finished them in time to fix them to the bollards on the Tuesday evening of Coronation week and immediately had folk stop outside in their cars to take photos. One man told us that his son was a guardsman and he was going to send him the photo! Social media soon had lovely comments flying across the sites!

Unfortunately, other folk were not so kind and all of the Easter covers were taken off and thrown around the doorway, a car park and garden wall (we are still missing one) and then Queen Camilla was taken on the Coronation Saturday evening by revelers heading home late at night and in spite of Social media pleas she has not been returned – but we will soldier on!!



But we were awarded first prize in the King Charles III Coronation High Street window display – thanks to the Parish Council for the certificate and tin of biscuits.

Thanks to all our group for their help and if anyone else would like to join us please have a word with Tilly, Natalie, Kate or me.

Janet Thompson

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We remember the following friends who have died this year:

Roger Wigmore  
Don Mitchell  
Thomas Oakley  
Richard Steane

Don, of course, was a long-time member of this church.  
Richard was a former leader of Boys' Brigade and was instrumental in building the rear Hall over 40 years ago. We extend our sympathy to Sylvia and all the family.

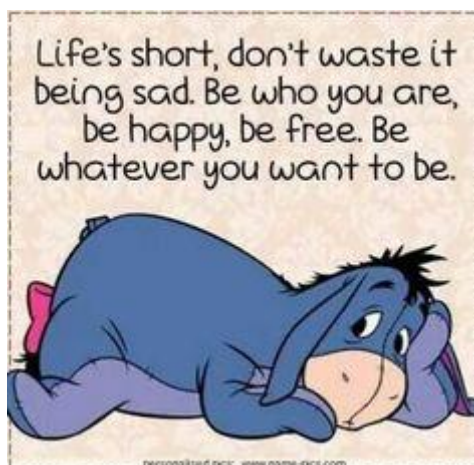
We pray God's blessing on all the families and friends of those who have passed.

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## DON AND BARBARA MITCHELL

It was with great sadness that we learned of the illness and then the passing of Don Mitchell last December. Don was a friend to so many of us for so many years and a loyal and faithful member of this church. During his membership he held most roles within the Church community – Church Steward, long time member of the Property Committee and was always there when something needed doing. He is greatly missed. Following the passing of Don, Barbara has now gone to live in Abbeyfields Care Home in Loughborough and is happy and settled in this new community. Her daughter, Jenny, has brought her along to several events at church and friends continue to visit her. Our love and blessings go to Jenny and Mark, Nick and Sue and all the family at this time.

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## in Barrow upon Soar

Representatives of the churches in Barrow upon Soar continue to meet together and this year are organising various activities so make sure that you enter these in your diary!

### 2023

Sunday 10 September at 11.00 am – A service and picnic on Millennium Park

Sunday 12 November – Village Remembrance Day Service at Holy Trinity Church

Sunday 10 December – A Walking Nativity

### 2024

Fridays 16<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup>, February, 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> March – Lent Lunches in the Trinity Rooms

Good Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March - Good Friday service and Lunch at Barrow upon Soar Methodist Church

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May – Week of Prayer for Christian Unity joint service at Barrow upon Soar Baptist Church

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> to Friday 17<sup>th</sup> May – Daily prayer for WPCU

Want to know more? Then have a word with our representatives – Tilly, Heather or Pauline.

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The annual accounts to the end of August 2022 have been independently checked and approved by the Church Council and are available for inspection on request.

They show the total held in all funds at 31/8/22 was £18,318, a reduction of £6,806 on the previous year. This is felt to be reasonable after a year of increased running costs, plus some high expenditure amounting to items £19,556, (Loan repayment £5000, Final Development project payment of 2.5% retention £6006, and retiling the roof over new coffee bar, kitchen, store, and plant room £8950)

We still have £15,000 to pay back to the Circuit over the next 3 years and I see no problem in achieving this.

### CHARITABLE GIVING

Last year we gave £1101 to external charities, (before sending gift aid) which was raised by special appeals and services. Support for charities in this way will continue, and this year the Church Council agreed that we should donate £500 each to two charities that would be nominated by the Church Council each year. This year the charities chosen are Methodist Homes and All We Can, and these donations have been sent. The Church Council has also decided to donate the coffee donations received at Sunday services and monthly minimarkets to the Foodbank currently operating from Mountsorrel Baptist Church.

## OFFERINGS AND GIFT AID

The year ending in August 2022 showed a fall in offerings of about 4% to £13685. This year offerings are expected to be about the same as last year, but at a time when all running costs, particularly fuel, have increased it is becoming more difficult to meet our expenditure so may I suggest that anyone who has not recently increased their giving to the church, to consider doing so if they are able.

There are different ways of making an offering to the church:

### 1. By Standing Order

Most people make contributions to the church by monthly standing order from their bank to the church bank account, and if the donation is from a taxpayer, the church can claim Gift Aid which increases the amount given by approximately 25%. Please see me for banking details if you want to set this up. If you are not a taxpayer, Gift Aid cannot be claimed on contributions made directly to the bank.

### 2. Using the Envelope Scheme.

I have sets of 52 dated envelopes, each set having its own number, and an offering can be put in an envelope each week, or when you want to, and placed on the collection plate at a service. When the collection is counted by the steward, the amount in the envelope is recorded with the envelope number, which making it possible to claim the 25% Gift Aid on cash or cheques if the donor is a taxpayer. If the donor is not a taxpayer, cash given in an envelope is still eligible for Gift Aid, but cheques are not.

### 3. On the collection plate

At every service there is a plate near the door where your gift (cash or cheque) can be placed. Cash donations made on the plate are eligible for Gift Aid, but cheques are not unless the signatory has made the Gift Aid declaration.

## LETTINGS

Our good facilities are very popular and are used for weekly and monthly community activities, in addition to daily use by Barrow Playgroup. Since the last report, we now have a Karate class each Saturday night, which is open to everyone, and the back hall, coffee bar and kitchen are used regularly for children's parties. The income from these groups provides valuable support towards the cost of running our premises.

Peter Yates – Treasurer

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## WEBSITE

<http://www.barrowuponsoarmethodistchurch.co.uk/>

Our online presence continues to grow, with many enquiries coming through the website. In fact our last two christenings came from an enquiry made online.

Our Facebook page has over 200 followers, and having the website makes us much more accessible to the community both locally and further afield. We use it for outreach, advertising and showcasing our activities, and the ability for our friends further afield keeping in touch and up to date with our activities and fellowship. This is the 5th year of the website and have just renewed the registration for a further 2 years, taking us into 2025. There's a whole section on the Methodist website regarding individual church websites and you may have noticed the change of colour to 'Methodist red'.

Also using the resources on the Methodist website, I was able to add the videos from the "There is Room" material at Christmastime.

Having Wi-Fi helps enormously with the screens and music for Sunday services, especially if the preacher asks to play or show something, which we don't know about beforehand and it was also great for the drop-ins we had for the Jubilee and Coronation, enabling us to play videos and clips from YouTube to our visitors.

The AV supplier have told us of some software especially made for church services and this needs further investigation, but at the moment we are managing well with PowerPoint slides.

Currently, only myself, Peter and Adrian are fully trained with the system, with Heather able to do the sound. Also just to point out, the sound system does have an app that we can connect to on smartphone, so if you see me 'on my phone' during a service, it is because I am controlling the sound and not shopping online !!!

Special thanks to Janet for producing the slides most weeks, with the pictures and the words displayed so well on the screen. There's always a theme to the slides, so can you try and work out the theme of pictures? We've had spring, animals, baby animals etc in recent weeks.

Main objective for this next year is to try and get more people trained up on the system, and to look at the new software.

If you would like to learn how to operate the sound system and 'push the buttons' for the slides, please let us know.



follow us on Twitter @BarrowMethsChurch

Natalie Thompson



[www.facebook.com/barrow-upon-soar-methodist-church](https://www.facebook.com/barrow-upon-soar-methodist-church)

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## PROPERTY

Our premises are still very well used with enquiries coming in most weeks. Barrow Playgroup is, of course, our main user and hold sessions every day. Other users include 1<sup>st</sup> Barrow upon Soar Guides, Cosmic Theatre School, Barrow Arts Theatre Society, Karate, Barrow upon Soar Gardening Club, Barrow upon Soar Parish Council and our own Circuit Leadership Team. We also hosted the recent Borough Council elections, and we have daily Holiday Clubs during some weeks of the Christmas, Easter and Summer holidays and regular children's birthday parties.



These bookings all have to be checked, forms and invoices sent out, arrangements made for extra equipment, access arrangements made and locking up afterwards. So, even though sometimes it may feel that nothing is being done it is all going on behind the scenes. Grateful thanks go to Peter who is there early every morning to check that everything is alright and that the heating is on if needed! We now have a new cleaner for the rear part of the building and Julie has settled in well and is doing an excellent job.

The Quinquennial inspection took place recently and thankfully did not show that any major work is needed – the electrical inspection has still to be done. The Property Committee will work through the inspector's suggestions in order of their priority.

Once again, thanks to everyone who helps in any way to keep our premises in good and safe order.

Trevor Ranson

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## CUPPA AND CHATTA

Cuppa and Chatta began in the summer of 2020 when the government said it was OK for a few people to meet together out of doors. It was repeated in the summer of 2021 as the weather allowed. It was then agreed to continue to meet once a month – usually on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday - as an informal time to meet other people - friends old and new – and just enjoy tasty (usually) homemade nibbles and drinks.



Doors open at 2.30 pm and we start to pack up at about 4.00 pm but our bottomless teapot is the last thing to be put away so if you're passing just pop in! All are welcome for one time or as a 'regular' There is no charge, but gifts or donations for the food bank are welcome. If you would like to join us just come along: if you know someone who might enjoy joining us please pass the message on. Our next meetings will be: 21 June, 19 July and 16 August.

If this is your 'cup of tea' we look forward to seeing you please phone if you want to know more on 01509 413524.

- Sue and Adrian Speight

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## DONATIONS FOR CHARNWOOD FOOD BANK



As you may be aware there is a crate just inside the Welcome Coffee Bar area for donations to the local food hub, based at Mountsorrel Baptist Church. We have been collecting these items and taking them to Mountsorrel as the crate fills up. Although there is sometimes a queue around the car park dropping off food we have been told that in addition many hundreds of £'s has to be spent to provide enough for all those who need food in our area. Some time ago it was agreed that donations for drinks etc in the coffee bar would be given to a charity and the present charity is Charnwood Food Bank – so please support this as you drink and chat and in any other

way that you are able - If you would like to make a personal donation please give this in an envelope to Sue, Adrian or Peter the Church Treasurer.

Many thanks

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## CRADLE ROLL 2023

### Christening

We were very pleased to welcome George Phillips on to our Cradle Roll on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> March. George is a lively 3 year old who was brought by his parents Louise and Jeff, for his Christening, supported by family members and friends. We look forward to seeing him grow within our Church Family.

### Baptism

We welcomed Shanaya Thomas and her daughter Tahleigha, on Easter Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> April, to be baptised, supported by friends.

Tahleigha is 11 years old and we pray for God's guidance for her through the challenges of Secondary School. Shanaya gave her Testament, and we promise to support her on her Spiritual journey.

We will remember you all in our prayers asking that you "may grow in grace and in the knowledge of God and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord".

God Bless you all.

Kate Morley

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## LADIES CIRCLE

I took over as 'leader' of the group at the end of the Summer. I must stress that I am just the mouthpiece, who is backed up by our speaker secretary and overall organiser Sue Preston (who keeps me on my toes), our deputy Sharon and Treasurer Estelle.

Our grateful thanks go out to Janet who has kept the group going for numerous years and is still our 'go to' person. We really appreciate all you have done and are still doing. THANK YOU!

We have managed to keep our subs at £25 this year, and our thanks to the church for continuing to support the group by allowing us to use it for a modest amount.

It was lovely to see everyone at our first meeting after the summer break as we presented a cheque for £630 to The Falcon Centre in Loughborough, our charity for the year 2021/2022. Afterwards we enjoyed a bring and share supper.

At our last AGM we chose MIND for this year and had a visit from David, their representative to talk to us about the Charity. Sue has arranged a varied programme for us which has included, Reflexology, a Games Evening,



a visit to Birstall Fire Station, a quiz night, Christmas Party and secret Santa, Four in a bed (contestant on the tv programme), our annual meal took us to The Moorings for the first time. We have had talks on Snowdrops, being a Mayor, a Danube cruise and Walks and Whispers (doggie care). Sandra has shared with us her thoughts at Advent and Easter, as always putting a different slant on things that gives us food for thought.

We still have things to look forward to, talks from Lillian Middleton and Judith Rodgers, a canal boat trip, a summer Barbeque and perhaps not so enthusiastically the AGM.

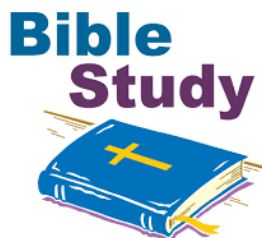
We are also holding a Strawberry Tea on 24th June and holding a Bric a Brac stall at the Street Fair on July 9th. The proceeds will go to this year's charity. So please put these dates in your diary and come along and support us.

A few of our members have suffered ill health during this time and we keep them in our thoughts wishing them well. We especially miss Gill who has been a member for many years, and we hope she finds the love and support she needs in her care home.

Anyone thinking they might like to join us at our meetings, you will be made very welcome and will find us a social and fun group and we would love to see you.

Diane Cave

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We are glad to report that our Bible Study group has now started up again, meeting on alternate Thursday evenings in the Quiet Room.

We started gently with some material for small groups that Heather found online from the Bible Society. Basically it just gave a small passage of scripture and asked us to look for "shockers or blockers", in other words anything that we found surprising or hadn't noticed before, or anything that we found difficult to accept or understand.

It wasn't deep study, but it opened up conversations and got us thinking. Sue then led us in a number of studies, including taking us through Lent using the material supplied by All We Can, and in May and June we will be using the Bible Month material from the Methodist website.

We are a small, informal group who meet to study the bible and to encourage each other in our faith and we would love to have more of you come to join us whenever you are able. Details of the meetings are in the notices, or have a word with one of us if you want to know more

Sandra Webb



# WORSHIP

One thing that we have learned from Lockdown is not to take for granted the tremendous privilege we have of coming together to worship our Lord. How we missed being able to meet together, and how we rejoice in our new found freedom!

We meet most Sunday mornings at 10.15 am to worship God with hymns, prayers, readings and a sermon or reflection by a minister or local preacher, or sometimes, now that fewer preachers are available, with a Local Arrangement service organised by the stewards. We are gradually getting accustomed to the use of the AV system to provide our music, and although it will never be the same as having our own organist we are grateful to have the technology available, and to those people who are able to work the 'magic' to make it happen. The beautiful pictures that accompany the slides are also very uplifting.

None of the current stewards are trained worship leaders so we rely heavily on online or printed material available when preparing a Local Arrangement, and we are especially grateful for "The Vine" complete services which we can download and adapt as necessary to suit our congregation. We usually try to make these services more informal and relaxed and more of a different style of service, often grouping the chairs around the coffee tables and taking our tea or coffee in with us, and occasionally including group discussion on issues raised in the service. At Pentecost we gathered in the Coffee Bar and celebrated the birthday of the church with bacon cobs and Danish pastries before sharing in hymns, readings, meditations and open discussion, which we all really enjoyed.

Over the next Quarter some of our services will be held at different times – two at 9.45am and one at 4pm – to cut down on the number of Local Arrangements needed over the holiday period. This won't be popular with everybody, but we hope you will bear with us as it will take a lot of pressure off the stewards. Please keep a watch on the notices or the website for details of these services.

Our worship is fairly informal, relaxed and friendly and we usually stay for coffee and a chat afterwards, so please feel free to join us either regularly or just for a visit as we come together to worship God.

Church Stewards

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## NEW HORIZONS

### **A friendship group for those who have been bereaved**



Our group membership is 15-20 of happy and friendly ladies. We have a wide and varied programme throughout the year always allowing time to chat and eat cake!

We celebrated Harvest at our September meeting. We collected non-perishable food which we donated to the Food Bank. A Beetle Drive followed, causing a lot of shrieks, moans and groans as the appropriate numbers did or did not appear.

"Mr Loughborough", Les Cope-Newman, entertained us in October with his many amusing stories about the TV programme "Four in a Bed". It was so good to hear about what happened behind the scenes and to have an insight into the programme.

Our November "All Souls' Service", remembering those who we have lost was led by Rev Sandra Marshall. She later told us more about herself and her work in the Methodist Church.

We had a super Christmas Celebration Meal at Pillings Lock Marina Restaurant. The food was absolutely delicious, and the company of friends made it particularly enjoyable.

We began the New Year with sadness as Betty Bennett passed away. She had been a member of New Horizons for many years. Her smile, cheery words and caring for others will be sadly missed. Our first meeting in 2023 New Year was a party comprising of food and games with lots of laughter.

Jan Smith and Kate Brown led us in a "Sing Along", in February, reminding us of "good old" favourites and awakening many memories. We certainly felt elated that afternoon with the power of music.

In March a very amusing talk was given by David Bell called, "Down the Garden Path", reminding us of our childhoods when we had to make the journey down the garden path to the toilet. It caused a lot of discussion and comparisons of our experiences. It was amazing how many different kinds of toilets we could remember. We all said, "Thank goodness for the invention of the flush toilet."

"Music and Monologues" by Tilly and Peter Yates was very popular in April and was enjoyed by all. We recognise the effect of words and music on our well-being.

We are now planning our July Summer Outing spending the day "cruising" down the river to Mountsorrel, enjoying a meal before returning to Loughborough. All on the Peter Le Marchant boat "Symphony" - we just hope for a sunny day.

During the year members of the group have lost loved ones and our thoughts and prayers are with them.

We are always ready to welcome new members, just come along on the first Monday of the month at 2pm. Someone will greet you at the door. Friends who understand how you feel are waiting to greet you.

Thank you to Janet and Pauline for their help.

Kate Morley



## **MEN'S SUPPER GROUP 2022/23**

It is now ten years since we started the Men's Supper Group and our membership has crept up to nineteen. Nine of the members are from our Church and ten are from outside of the Church.

This year we had to say Goodbye to Don who had been actively involved with us since the start. He is sadly missed.



We continue our original aim, that whatever we are doing it must include a meal, whether this is in the Church or elsewhere. I am grateful to Peter, Adrian and Trevor for the meals they have provided.

Our programme for 2022 – 2023 has been varied and more meetings have been taking place away from our usual 7.30 pm starting time. We also had to change some of the planned meetings because of rising costs and the situation with the pubs in the village.

In September we walked along the canal to Pillings Lock for lunch. We have had talks by Rev. Clive Watts on his Missionary Work in Tanzania and from Kathryn Timmons on the work of the Heritage Group. We had our

Christmas Meal at the Hunting Lodge, Quiz Evening with Roger and Skittles at the Conservative Club. Our "Learn a new Skill", this year, was Tenpin Bowling at the Hollywood Bowl in Leicester. To finish our programme we have a Princess River Cruise on the River Trent, a Barbeque and our Planning Evening.

We are very keen to increase our membership so if you know anyone you think might be interested and we could approach, then please speak with any of the men.

Mike

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## MINIMARKET



Our Minimarkets continue and we have a queue of regulars waiting to be let in at 10.00 am every first Saturday in the month although we did change the date in May so that we could watch the Coronation! Some friends come for the bargains but other just come along to enjoy a coffee and meet and chat with others.

We continue to be grateful for all that is donated to us. Most of this is sold at the minimarket but some is taken by Yvonne to car boots and sold on for us. We are very grateful to Yvonne for this and for all she has done for us over many years.

During the year we had a 10p Book Sale and our Bumper Plant Sale. Some of the plants for this are grown and nurtured by church members and friends but some of us travelled to a Lincolnshire nursery to pick up perennials and bedding plants to sell on. Again this is a contact of Yvonne's, and we are extremely grateful to Bridget and her family for their support!

Bric and Brac continues to be the most well attended stall with the many different items on sale and jigsaws again were very popular during the winter months.

Thank you to everyone who helps us on a regular basis, sometimes we struggle at holiday times so if you could offer any help it would be very much appreciated.

If you are interested, or know of anyone who might be interested, we are now able to offer recognised local charities a free table for their own fundraising. To enquire or book please contact [barrowmeths@gmail.com](mailto:barrowmeths@gmail.com). or speak to Janet

Watch our Facebook and website pages and the Village News section in the Loughborough Echo for dates and details of our events.

Janet Thompson

## MUSIC GROUP



Not much to report as we are still unable to take part in worship without a regular organist.

We do support the monthly Sunday evening organ recitals at Mountsorrel Methodist Church, which are very enjoyable.

Peter and Edd

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On September 10<sup>th</sup> the annual Ride and Stride event organised by the Leicestershire Historic Churches Trust took place with Philip Thornborrow visiting some interesting churches to raise £120 in sponsor money which was divided between the Historic Churches Trust and our church.

Thanks to Phillip and his sponsors, and those who opened our church to welcome visitors from around the county.

This year's Ride and Stride will be on \*Saturday September 9<sup>th</sup> and will have people taking part again.

Peter Yates

\*To enable us to open our Church for people taking part in the Ride and Stride we need volunteers to spare an hour or two to register visitors.

If you could help it would be really appreciated so look out for details in the weekly notices nearer the time.

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Some 2023 events are listed below – see the Notice Board, weekly notices or website for more details.

### **ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING**

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> June at 11.30 pm in the Worship Area followed by Bring and Share Lunch**

**EVERYONE WELCOME**

Saturday 16 <sup>th</sup> September	Barrow upon Soar Show – An open show for all ages: Vegetables, Fruit, Flowers, Baking, Photography, Knitting & Crochet, Patchwork.
Saturday 19th November	Christmas Fayre