

# **BARROW UPON SOAR METHODIST CHURCH**

North Street, Barrow upon Soar, Leicestershire

LE12 8QQ



## **ANNUAL REPORT 2024**



**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 Open "Sharing Scripture" hour
	7.00 pm 7.30 pm	
Every 1 <sup>st</sup> Monday	2.00 pm	
<b>TUESDAY</b> Every 4 <sup>th</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 4 <sup>th</sup> Wed	7.30 pm 2.30 pm 3.15 – 4.30 pm	Ladies Circle Cuppa and Chatta 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> Weekly 1 <sup>st</sup> in the month 3 <sup>rd</sup> in the month	6.00 pm 10.00-11.00 am 2.00-4.00 pm	Karate Minimarket & Coffee Morning Crochet & Craft

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

*Why not come and worship with us:*

*Every Sunday at 10.15 am*

*See Church Notice Board for midweek meetings*

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR MINISTER, REV SANDRA MARSHALL

Dear Friends,

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 twins from a village family and the great granddaughter of the late Mrs Jean Worthington were baptised.

The decorated Bollards have been excellent again this year. These draw much attention and encourage people to stop and look 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 Chatta, Fun @ Church, Ladies Circle, New Horizons, Bible Study, 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 Walking Nativity, and the Lent Lunches and Good Friday service here. Lent lunches were very successful this year and raised a large amount for a charity supporting refugees. Churches Together are planning joint activities for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in June – it was felt January wasn't a good time so we moved our week! Though not strictly Churches Together, we have enjoyed hosting and being lead in Scripture exploration by Fr Anthony on Monday evenings over the last few weeks and have been joined by our Roman Catholic friends.

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. Three of our stewards, Heather, Kate and Sandra are due to retire and we have struggled to find replacements. I am very thankful for the stewards who offer all their "varied gifts and arts."

We still need people to volunteer to be Vestry Stewards – could you help with this to support the leadership team?

We have yet to build on the work that Matt Forsythe has begun with us and I encourage you all to read Matt's report and to pray for God to enlarge our vision for the future of this church and its work, life and ministry.

I feel we have had a good year. Thank you to everyone who has served us well with their skills, time and gifts. Thank you all for the part you play in the life of the Church.

Rev Sandra



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### **REPORT FROM MATT FORSYTHE, District Mission Enabler (Northampton District) VISITING LOCATION: BARROW UPON SOAR METHODIST CHURCH 23/11/2022**

**Purpose:** To engage with Barrow upon Soar Methodist Church on their next steps and discern what lay role might be a part of that.

**Reflections:** Barrow upon Soar is a village church at the heart of the community. It's a newly renovated building which has lots of potential.

**Who and what is Barrow upon Soar** (from the group exercise)

- A friendly and warm welcoming church
- Hopeful for growth
- Ageing congregation
- Premises which are located centrally in the village and accessible to all
- Open to new ideas
- Lots of activities that occur Fun@Church, Ladies Circle, Men's Supper Group, Crochet and Craft, Cuppa and Chatter, Bible Study to name a few.
- Village supports the activities but don't attend worship
- Fundraising
- Open to varying ways of worship but have a limited knowledge of how to engage in this area.

**DME COMMENTS:** There is an awareness that the church congregation is ageing in profile. The village location means that the church has a profile but this does not translate to Sunday worship attendance. The openness to new ways of worship on a Sunday is one area to explore. How this might take place on the plan and what giftings of the local preachers could be utilised.

The building's accessibility means that running events are easily done if the people are there to help run them. However, the capacity issue remains as there seems to be an awful lot going on already. Therefore, when we consider what role could be developed, I think it needs to be linked with something that's already going on eg Fun@Church.

**What is your community**

Here is the website that shares the data on the local parish <https://cuf.org.uk/lookup-tool>

In addition it is worth looking up the census data here <https://census.gov.uk/census-2011-results>

Barrow is in an interesting geographical location. The opportunity is there for the church to ensure that its fresh look continues to be that way eg changing its window display little and often etc.



**What do you love?**

Church

- Fellowship
- Support network
- The building and its opportunity
- Lots of ideas
- Worship
- Bible Study
- Variety of worship

Circuit

- Support, advice and encouragement
- Local preachers
- Fellowship and meeting others
- Variety of preachers and styles
- Support for LA
- Financial support
- Circuit service

Community:

- People
- Churches Together
- Other groups
- Room bookings
- Links with the primary school
- Yarn bombers
- Kerb appeal

**WHAT                      HOW                      WHY**

An area identified in conversation was what is Barrow's why? Often we want to know what we can do but if we don't have the right why then often we can find the solution harder to identify, importantly it is vital that as Loughborough Methodist Circuit continues, what function does the Circuit play in helping establish each Why locally.

**Barrow Why?**

- “For all to flourish”
- “Fellowship and other Christians
- “Seek to share in God's love in word and action”

### DME Comment

I would encourage you as a church to continue to workshop your why and when you're happy with it, have it clear on your website and around your building. This WHY will be the well that you come back to draw from time and time again. Given the recent building developments, there is plenty of opportunity for the building internally to represent this WHY. For example how can the hands be used to form a piece of art that articulates more of Barrow upon Soar's community? Could a missional start-up grant be used to access further funding for this idea?

### What are the dreams for the future?

For the church to grow into its new season and use its resource (building) to reach the community for Christ.

### Reflections

Exploration of Holy habits to see how disciplines within their discipleship might help the church thrive. How could the church explore the employment of a lay worker that could support Fun@Church and explore how this can be beneficial in other areas of the church. There were questions about where Fun@Church could go next. Having someone coming alongside would help those who might feel tired.

The church needs to ask the question, "How can I help?" This question might bring more answers as to what someone employed could do next.

The playgroup has not been engaged for quite some time. How might this group be a stakeholder group that is alongside the mission statement? Find out their needs and allow that to inform what could happen next.

**DME Final comments:** Barrow upon Soar has immense potential and the possibility of employing someone to add extra capacity but. Importantly, model evangelism at Fun@Church.

"Everyone an Evangelist" could be a course that this church could benefit greatly from. The activity and building are there but evangelism was named as an area that Barrow wants to grasp more. See the link below for details.

### Useful Links

- <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/evangelism-growth/practise-evangelism/equipped-for-evangelism/everyone-an-evangelist/>
- <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/there-is-room-advent-and-christmas-2022-resources/>
- <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/evangelism-growth/discipleship-pathways-travelling-together/>
- <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/a-methodist-way-of-life/a-methodist-way-of-life-resources/>
- <https://www.northamptonmethodistdistrict.org.uk/for-ministers-and-office-holders/finance/>
- <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/the-bible/bible-month/>
- <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/prayer/methodist-prayer-handbook/>
- <https://www.warmwelcome.uk/>

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## STEWARDS' REPORT

Stewarding is one of those jobs that Everybody assumes Somebody will do. Somebody will open the church ready for Sunday worship. Somebody will contact the preacher during the week for the order of service and find readers for the lessons. Somebody will lock up after everyone has gone home. Somebody will meet with the minister and other stewards every few months to discuss the life and ministry of the church, plan for future services, make decisions or act on decisions made by the Church Council. Somebody will. Could I please ask you to pause for a moment to consider if that Somebody, might be You?

Three of the four stewards will be standing down this year, and although we are very grateful that one person has already volunteered to join the team, we really do need more. The duties themselves are not onerous and if there are enough people to share the load they come around less often. We all have different gifts and abilities and accept that not everybody can do everything, so please don't be put off if there are some aspects of stewarding that you don't feel comfortable with. Just have a word with one of us or with Rev Sandra to see what is involved, and then prayerfully consider if you might be able to serve the church in this way.

Your stewards this year have been Sandra Webb, Heather Doda, Kate Morley and Natalie Thompson, and I would like to thank them on your behalf for all their work over this time. I would also like to thank all those others who contribute in various ways to the worship experience, whether by making sure we have a warm and well maintained building to come into, preparing and sending out notices, preparing the slides and operating the AV system, providing and arranging flowers, preparing communion, greeting people on arrival, serving tea and coffee afterwards or generally just being helpful and supportive.

Sandra, Heather and Kate will all be standing down this year.

Please consider if You might be able to join the team in our place.

If stewarding is definitely not for you, we would still value your help in praying for suitable people to come forward, and in supporting them in prayer through the year.

On behalf of all the stewards I would like to thank you all for your support and encouragement over the years.

Sandra Webb

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## CRADLE ROLL



We were delighted to welcome Olive Gray Hopgood to church on **Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> February**. Olive is a beautiful little girl who was brought by her parents Libby and Jake for her Christening, supported by family members and friends. Olive and her parents live in Shepshed, therefore she will join the Cradle Roll at Christchurch Methodist Church, Shepshed. We will keep her in our prayers and look forward to hearing about her as she grows.

### **Christening: 5<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

George Phillips is now 4 years old and is thinking about going to school. He attends Barrow upon Soar Playgroup at our church which he enjoys very much. The family is enjoying their new home at Mountsorrel.

### **Christening: 16<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

Connor and Kai are very lively at 18 months.

All the families on our **Cradle Roll** receive visits and gifts from our church, throughout the year. We love to see their progress as they grow and we invite them to join us at church.

### **Baptism: 9<sup>th</sup> April 2023 Easter Day**

Shanaya and Tahleigha Thomas are enjoying their new home. We continue to keep them in our prayers and ask for God's continued love and guidance in their lives.

God bless you all.

Kate

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## LADIES CIRCLE

It doesn't seem a year ago since I did my first report as Leader of the Ladies Circle, but now, as then the people who do all the work are Sue Preston, our Speaker's Secretary and Estelle Mace, our Treasurer ably backed up by Sharon Gudger as Vice Leader and provider of flowers. Not forgetting Janet who makes sure we are up to scratch. Many thanks to you all.

Sue has worked her magic again and has managed to come up with a fun and interesting programme that has enabled us to keep our subs at £25 for the year. Our thanks go to the church for continuing to support the group in many ways.

It was lovely to see everyone at our first meeting after the summer break as we presented a cheque for £500 to MIND our charity for the year 2022/23. Afterwards we enjoyed a bring and share supper. Unfortunately we have had problems with the cheque which has been reissued and as far as we know still has not been cashed. (Can't seem to give the money away!)

At our last AGM we chose the Royal Papworth Charity for this year and Catherine Canning shared John's and her experience with the hospital and the support of the charity.

Sue has arranged a varied programme for us which has included, Change your mind – change your life, a Games Evening, Chocolate making (which were yummy) by the delightful Summer and Pat Mitchell. A talk on the life of Marylyn Monroe and a sellout Fashion Show and clothes sale. Advent thoughts with Rev Sandra, Christmas Party and secret Santa. A talk on deaf awareness by our lovely Natalie, who attempted to teach us to "sing" in sign language. Sue and Adrian presented a quiz for us. Kate Crowfoot talked about the help and support she can offer in her job of Support in the Community. Our annual meal takes us to the Hunting Lodge. We have another quiz, Easter thoughts, talks on Bags, Beauty, Flowers and My Life by Coral Kelham BEM to look forward to. Also our AGM and summer Social Evening.

### ADVANCE NOTICE

**2024 is a really SPECIAL YEAR for the Ladies Circle as it will celebrate its DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY .....60 years of fun and fellowship which will be celebrated in October.**

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

Diane Cave

## Bible Study



A small group of us continue to meet for Bible Study fortnightly on Thursday evenings in the Quiet Room. The meetings are friendly and informal and the leadership is shared between us. Often we use the same notes that are prepared for the Trinity Loughborough home church groups and adapt them for our use. These notes sometimes follow the lectionary and at other times pick up on a particular theme or season.

So far, among other things, we have followed The Season of Creation course, done a number of studies on Advent, had one or two lectionary based studies, and are currently following the Methodist Sunshine and Showers course on prayer. In June we expect to be using the Bible Month material on Genesis. The meetings aren't deep, theological studies but more a case of being open to what the Lord might be saying to us through the Bible passages or through each other, and to continue to support and encourage one another in our faith.

We would love to welcome more of you to join us at any time, whether or not you are able to come on a regular basis. The details of the meetings can be found in the notices or have a word with one of us if you would like to know more.

Sandra Webb

*"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path."*

Psalm 119 verse 105 NIV



# CROCHET AND CRAFT

The craft group is growing in members meeting in the Welcome coffee bar to knit, crochet, embroider and chat together.

We all work at different things at different speeds sometimes making things to enter in the village show in September. This year we intend to make new covers for the Christmas bollards.

We welcome everybody to join us to learn new crafts or just come for the chat and laughter.

We meet on the third Saturday of the month from 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm.

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# YARN BOMBING

We have continued to "dress" the bollards during the year for Christmas, Easter, Remembrance Day etc. Some of the covers are looking a bit sad after being out in all weathers so we are planning some refurbishment this year.

If anyone else would like to join us in this venture then please have a word with Janet, Kate, Natalie or Tilly.



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# FUN@CHURCH 2024

We continue to have a regular, lively group of 15-20 children attending with their parents, grandparents and carers.

We vary the format of our afternoon and work on a different theme to carry the Christian teaching. Each session will involve an illustrated story, songs which are active, or accompanied with our percussion instruments! Our prayers can be read, recited or interactive and using props, for example when praying about countries in the world the children had blow up and bouncy globes which they shared to find a country for their prayers. We have a snack and remember to say "thank you" using one of our many Graces. The games and crafts also illustrate our theme.

We like the children to take their craft activities home to remind them of what we have done and to share it with others. Some evidence of our activities are displayed on the boards in the Coffee Lounge. The Lego work is always proudly displayed on the tables at the back of the Worship Area for all to admire.

We celebrated Pentecost when we learned how the Holy Spirit replaced the fear felt by the Apostles and filled them with enthusiasm and courage to go out and share Christ's story. We made attractive pictures involving blowing paint, (wind and fire - red paint). We made balloon rockets and a clever, moving model showing Jesus ascending into Heaven.



Our work about Jonah set up situations when we learned how we must trust and follow God's directions. We had fun with parachute games illustrating the rough sea. We made models of Jonah inside the big fish. We also talked about and made illustrations on how we can help to keep the sea clean. This linked with another session on "Caring for the World Around Us" when we talked about the beauty of the World and how we must use the resources wisely and not wasting them. We made bird feeders and a lively parachute game of finding treasures under the sea.

At Christmas we considered how "light" was important in the story of Jesus' birth. We thought about the feelings of the shepherds on the hillside and the Wise Men as they followed the star and the star resting over the stable. All our activities illustrated the light, in our Advent Ring, glittering baubles, angels with trumpets, stars and the Lego Corner made buildings shining their lights and the importance of them. We talked about Jesus being the light of the World and how we can show our own light. We hope you enjoy seeing the Lego models which are placed on the tables at the back of the Worship Area.

In January we were "All Aboard", using "Ships" as we discussed and illustrated "Discipleship", "Worship", "Stewardship", "Fellowship". This was quite challenging, but the making of cork boats and sailing them, making them float by adjusting the materials used as sails and talking about the problems Paul would have encountered on his journeys all helped them to understand the words which we often use in Church. We were able to draw on these words when we worked on "God's Wonderful world" thinking about our responsibilities as inhabitants of our planet and "Learning to work and live together".

We thoroughly enjoy working with the children. We have been very grateful to Joyce and Nancy who have kindly helped us at times. Please keep the children and their families, plus the leaders, in your prayers.

Kate, Heather, Janet, Mike, Katie, plus our young helper Sophie.



## **WEBSITE & AUDIO VISUAL SYSTEM**

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

Our online presence is growing all the time with many enquiries coming through the website, including christenings, funeral enquiries and room bookings. The website is updated weekly with the weekly notices and two months of calendar/forthcoming events.

Facebook has almost 300 followers and is a good medium for advertising events and sharing our activities with the community.

I'm not sure how many of our regular attenders look at the website. The majority of our "hits" are from external enquiries, or friends further afield who want to keep in touch and updated of our activities.

The front page has upcoming events and the calendar page is kept up to date with at least two months of Church activities displayed.

Preparing the slides is an additional weekly task, and I am extremely grateful to Mum for preparing them every week.

The order of service usually comes through from the Preacher by Thursday at the latest, but unfortunately on a couple of occasions, we haven't received anything until the Saturday. This, of course, not only causes issues with preparing the slides, but also with the Stewards organising the scripture readings. This has been raised to the Circuit, and hopefully will get better. We do our best to have the slides ready for each service.

When re-reading last year's report, I stated that the main objective for this year was to train other people to operate the AV system, to be able to share it out amongst a few people. I arranged a training session, but unfortunately only a couple of people volunteered but were unable to attend the training. Janet is the only additional person trained since last year and can operate the slides on a Sunday morning.

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

Please look at the website and hopefully you'll see just how much we do as a church. The website is only as good as the information on it so please keep the information coming in.

Natalie Thompson



## Treasurer's Annual Report

The accounts to the end of August 2023 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 31/8/23 was £29360, which is a healthy amount, even after allowing for the outstanding loan of £10000 from the Circuit, which will be paid off in the next two years.

### **Our income comes mainly from:**

- a) letting the premises, which has increased following the redevelopment in 2019/20
- b) the church by regular contributions at services and by monthly standing order direct to the bank.... **the total amount received in this way has not changed significantly over the past few years.**
- c) from church fund raising events such as monthly minimarket, Craft and November Fairs, .... This income has been fairly stable, although mini market income has reduced over the past few months.

### **Expenditure increases every year and comprises**

- a) fixed costs which include the Assessment, (to pay for Ministers, their manses and other costs associated with the Methodist Connexion), insurance, mandatory checking/servicing equipment, essential maintenance, repayment of the loan, etc, which are costs that do not vary very much as use of the building increases.
- b) variable costs that do depend on the amount buildings are used, these being gas, electricity, cleaning, running repairs, additional cleaning etc.

Currently church income is enough to pay the assessment and the fixed costs, but other costs such as charitable donations, fuel, cleaning and maintenance costs would come from the income from lettings.

### **Charitable Giving.**

Last year we gave £1115 to external charities, (before sending gift aid) which was raised by special appeals and services. Support for charities in this way will continue, and the Church Council agreed that this year we would donate £500 each to Action for Children, Methodist Homes and All We Can, and these donations have been made.

The Church Council 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 August 2023 showed a slight increase in offerings to £14123. This year offerings are expected to be about the same as last year, but as mentioned above it is becoming more difficult to meet our expenditure and if you are able to increase your giving to the church, it will be very helpful.

**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 eligible for gift aid 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 Playgroups. The income from these groups provides valuable support towards the cost of running our premises.

Peter Yates – Treasurer



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## **in Barrow upon Soar**

**Representatives of the churches in Barrow upon Soar continue to meet and organise events for you to share**

NEW: Our Catholic friends invite you to join them for a "Sharing Scripture" bible study every Monday evening 7.30 pm in the Welcome Coffee Bar at the Methodist Church.

Lent lunches were held up to Good Friday – proceeds this year to BACA

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity – Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May at the Baptist Church

Churches Together outdoor service - Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> September on the Millenium Park

Village Remembrance Day service at Holy Trinity Church – Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> November

Advent Walking Nativity around the village

Look out for more details nearer the time or see Tilly, Heather or Pauline

# CUPPA AND CHATTA

After an eventful year when some of the meetings had to be cancelled for personal reasons, Cuppa and Chatta resumed meeting on the third Wednesday of each month.

It is a very informal group for anyone to come and join in a time of fellowship with friends old and new.... we have welcomed church members and non-members ..... anyone who would like a change of scenery. It originated during the 'covid' restrictions as a garden meeting place at our home and then in the Methodist Welcome Coffee Lounge.

During the next few months we are hoping to talk to those who have been coming recently and to discover how Cuppa and Chatta may continue in the next year so that we might reach more of the new people who may appreciate the time of fellowship.

Sue and Adrian Speight



## 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

We remember the following friends who have died this year:

Margaret Thomasson

Iris Perkins

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

"When someone you love becomes a memory, the memory becomes a treasure."



# NEW HORIZONS

*A friendship group for those who have been bereaved*



We have a group membership of 25 ladies with a monthly meeting attendance of 15-20. All our members are at different stages of bereavement and support is given by fellow group members and group leaders. Our programme is very varied, planned to give support to the members, plus giving them time to talk to each other over tea and cake.

Jade Martin PCSO visited us in June and gave advice about personal safety. Many concerns were raised by the group and these were discussed. Jade answered everything with clarity. She was able to hand out security items and reassured us that by taking her advice we need not be unduly worried about our safety.

Our Summer Outing was a "cruise" on the Peter Le Marchant Trust Canal Boat. We had a very enjoyable time together and a super lunch at "The Waterside" at Mountsorrel. We were blessed with pleasant weather, if a little cool.

The Mayor of Charnwood, Margaret Sidgwick, visited us, in August, and we were told of the history, meaning and importance of each piece of her regalia by Carol as she "dressed" the Mayor for a formal occasion. She explained that "one size fits all" and how gentle adjustments are made. The significance of the Mayoral chain was also explained. We enjoyed hearing about the charities she will support throughout her year in office and what they meant to her.

We celebrated Harvest by singing harvest songs, talking about the problems facing the farmers and the effect of climate change. We all brought our gifts of non-perishable food to donate to the Food Hub at Mountsorrel. David Ellison explained how the food is organised and distributed and especially what is needed. We were all reminded of the collection point in the Welcome Coffee Bar.

Meena Mistry always brings pleasure and excitement as she enthusiastically shows us how to create beaded Christmas decorations and jewellery gifts. Everyone was thrilled with the decorations made to take home.

The All Souls' Service, before our group meeting was led by Rev Sandra Marshall. It is a very special time for us to remember those near to us, we have lost.

Our activity was English Country Dancing, which was met with some trepidation, but was enjoyed by all. Those who danced were very surprised at what they could do, those who chose not to dance set up their own judging panel, on the lines of "Strictly Come Dancing". It was a very happy atmosphere with plenty of laughter.

The Ladies, once again chose, to go to Pillings Lock Marina Restaurant for our Christmas Lunch. We were served a delicious meal and the excellent company we were with provided the love and support needed at this time.

"Start the New Year well" was a party focusing on our well being. We did some exercises, we sang, we laughed, and played games together. All were designed to help us start the year in a positive way working together, having fun and supporting each other.

Our afternoon with the Barrow upon Soar Ukulele Band was most enjoyable. The music and songs brought back memories as we joined in singing and dancing. The enthusiasm of the band was infectious and love of these, our friends, brought such pleasure to our meeting.

Sadly, we have lost one of our members, a dear friend Joan Scott, who died in February this year. She had been a member of our group for many years. We will miss her very much. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family and friends.

We are always ready to welcome new members at New Horizons. You will find friends who understand how you feel, waiting ready to greet you.

Thank you to Pauline, Janet and Mike for your support at all times.

Kate

# CHURCH FLOWERS

Every Sunday we have flowers on the Communion Table and these are later taken out to someone in the community who is in need of some TLC with our love! If you know of anyone who would benefit from this then please let Tilly know.

If you would like to mark a special event ie birthday, anniversary or family celebration by donating flowers then that would be gratefully appreciated. Holiday periods are sometimes difficult to cover and if anyone could also help out during these times we would be grateful.

If you would like to know more about this then please see me.

Tilly Yates



## RIDE+STRIDES

On Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2023 the annual Ride and Stride event organised by the Leicestershire Historic Churches Trust took place with me, Philip, Carlolyn, and Heather visiting some interesting churches to raise £295 in sponsor money which was divided between the Historic Churches Trust and our church.



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

This year's Ride and Stride will be on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September and will have people taking part again.

Peter



The Prayer Chain is an important part of the ministry of the church and supplements the Sunday prayer list for situations that may arise during the week and are too urgent to wait for the next Sunday, or for people who just feel in need of some extra prayer support at any time. It is always a privilege to be asked to pray for others so please don't feel that your concern isn't important enough to mention. We appreciate that some concerns are very personal and would emphasise that we don't need to know all the details, just feel free to give us as much or as little information as you are comfortable with. We treat all requests that come via the Prayer Chain as confidential unless we are told otherwise and would not include anything on the Sunday prayer list without your permission. All you need to do is to tell us that you have a request for the Prayer Chain and we will pass the request to other members of the Chain until we are all praying into the situation. It is always encouraging to hear of answered prayer and we are grateful for the feedback that is often given.

If you feel that you might like to become a part of this ministry, please have a word with Heather or myself to see what is involved. All you need is a belief in the power of prayer and the ability to respect confidences. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sandra Webb

Philippians 4:6-7, Paul wrote, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

# MEN'S SUPPER GROUP 2023/24

The Supper Group has now been running for eleven years and our membership remains at nineteen. Although three of our members, Michael, Graham and Syd can no longer attend we have three new members to keep our membership at nineteen. Eight of the members are from our Church and eleven are from outside the Church.

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

Our 2023/2024 programme has continued to be varied in the activities, locations and starting times. In September we walked around the village and along the canal for a meal at the Hunting Lodge. We have had talks from Roger Marlow on Fishing for England, from Helen Burgess on Community Gardening in Loughborough, from David Ellison on the work of the Food Hub and the Rev Karen Beecham on her journey through life. We had our Christmas Meal at the Soar Bridge Inn. We will be going to Hollywood Bowl again as this proved very successful last year, our "Learn a New Skill" will be Pétanque at the Soar Bridge and our "Day Out" will be to Newark to visit Newark Air Museum and then Newark Castle or a Boat Trip on the River Trent.



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

Minimarket continues to be held on the first Saturday of every month from 10.00 to 11.00 am. There is always a queue of friends all waiting to enter the Hall to see what bargains are on offer while others just come to sit and chat to friends over coffee.

Goods are still donated to us every month and we are very grateful for these. Items that we are not allowed to sell such as electrical goods are taken by Yvonne who very kindly takes them to a car boot sale and sells them for us.

This year we held another Bumper Outdoor Plant Sale which attracted a huge amount of people and again we are grateful to Yvonne and to Bridget at the plant nursery in Lincolnshire for their support.

Bric a Brac is still the most attended stall with a multitude of household and personal items on offer – also available are greetings cards, cakes, toys, books, CDs, plants and both adult and children's clothes.

It was agreed at our Church Council meeting that payment for refreshments at Minimarket should be offered on a donation basis and that this money should then go to the Soar Valley Food Bank and our treasurer now sends this on a regular basis where it is used to buy essentials for distribution to those in need.

If you are interested, or know of anyone who might be interested, we are 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.

Our thanks go to Adrian, Carol, Coral, Ed, Estelle, Joan, Kate, Kathryn, Mike, Natalie, Pat L, Peter, Soo, Sue, Tilly and Yvonne who have helped us over many years and to Pat M and Summer for cakes.

See our posters outside Church and keep an eye on our Facebook and website pages for dates and details of our events.

Janet Thompson

**CRAFT FAIR:** This year we also held a very successful Craft Sale and we are grateful to Natalie for organising this.

# PROPERTY REPORT

During the year we have been busy completing the one urgent and other minor repairs highlighted in the Quinquennial report.



The major repair related to an uneven slab in the courtyard outside the coffee lounge doors, which was only rated urgent because it is the play area for the playgroup attendees. Most of these repairs were carried out, with very many thanks, to Peter who works very hard to ensure the property remains in excellent condition.

We have also used Ian Bruce to carry out roof repairs to the sloping roof at the rear of the church hall.

The building has been well used by a number of different groups apart from church and playgroup and it is a big thank you to Janet for all the time, effort and hard work in liaising and arranging with all the users.

Trevor Ranson



To any of our events - see the Notice Board, weekly notices or website for more details.

## **ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING**

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April at 11.45 am in the Worship Area**

**EVERYONE WELCOME**

## **BARROW UPON SOAR VILLAGE SHOW**

an open show for all ages: Vegetables, Fruits, Flowers, Baking, Photography, Knitting & Crochet, Patchwork, Embroidery

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September

To find out more about any of the groups and activities in this report please email [barrowmeths@gmail.com](mailto:barrowmeths@gmail.com)