

# BARROW UPON SOAR METHODIST CHURCH

North Street, Barrow upon Soar, Leicestershire  
LE12 8QA



## ANNUAL REPORT 2026



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**Please contact the**  
Circuit Office – Email: [circuitoffice@charnwoodmowbraymethodist.org.uk](mailto:circuitoffice@charnwoodmowbraymethodist.org.uk)  
Telephone: 07513 988341  
Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday  
10.00 am until 2.00 pm



### 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 "New Horizons" – a friendship group for those who are bereaved
	7.00 pm	
	7.30 pm	
1 <sup>st</sup> in the month	2.00 pm	
<b>TUESDAY</b>	4.30 – 7.30 pm	Cosmic Theatre Schools Men's Supper Group
Every 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday	7.30 pm	
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>		Ladies Circle Cuppa and Chatta Fun@Church for children & their parents/carers
Alternate weeks	7.30 pm	
Every 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed	2.30 pm	
Every 4 <sup>th</sup> Wed	3.15 – 4.30 pm	
<b>THURSDAY</b>	6.30 – 9.30 pm	Barrow Arts Theatre Society Bible Study – see notices
Alternate weeks	7.30 pm	
<b>SATURDAY</b>		Karate Minimarket & Coffee Morning Crochet & Craft
Weekly	6.00 pm	
1 <sup>st</sup> in the month	10.00-11.00 am	
3 <sup>rd</sup> in the month	2.00-4.00 pm	

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

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR MINISTER, REV KAREN BEECHAM

It has been my joy and privilege to be your Minister for the past year. We have enjoyed a variety of worship and some very good Local Arrangements arranged by the stewards. We have had a baptism to show God's love and grace to those who ask. I have enjoyed sharing Christmas and Easter with you.

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, Crochet and Craft and Mini-Market.

We have continued the pattern of Churches Together in Barrow events beginning with the Remembrance Day service, Advent Service, lent lunches and Good Friday Service.

I am grateful for the Stewards Team, all their hard work and dedication in serving this church and community.

We have launched a new Circuit this year and have enjoyed the new local preachers and Ministers that are part of Charnwood & Mowbray. We look forward to welcoming the Rev Samuel in September, to be the Minister for Trinity, Barrow upon Soar and Mountsorrel.

I want to thank you all for using your gifts, abilities and talents to service this church and the community around us.

Thank you for welcoming me.

Rev Karen



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## Stewards Report

Two years in as Head Steward and I am getting more involved as representative to Circuit and responsibilities that Head Steward has as well as life within our own Church.

Our current Church Stewards are myself, Philip Thornborrow and Tilly Yates. Soo Shippen has stepped down as a steward and I would like to thank her and am grateful for her service with us. Our small team meet every couple of months with the support of Rev Karen.

Our Sunday Stewards team continues to work extremely well, and it does take the burden off the Church Stewards every week – so thank you to our Sunday Stewards team of Heather Doda, Janet Thompson and Sandra Webb. With 3 Church Stewards and 3 Sunday Stewards, we do have a good small team. If you would like to become a Sunday Steward, please let us know.

As was discussed at the Church Council meeting and then at Circuit meeting recently, we have been asked for ideas of different forms of worship - whether it be a different time, a section service etc, this is due to the lack of local preachers and Ministers to cover all the Churches in the Circuit. We also discussed this as a Stewards team and took our ideas to Circuit meeting in March. Therefore, for our next plan (Jun-Aug 2026), we have two local arrangements, two section services (one at Barrow and one at Mountsorrel), and a 4pm service. It is something we have to try and every Church in the Circuit is doing the same.

We have had a few local arrangement services and although we have more than a full year's worth of the TwelveBaskets Vine material, we do try and pull some other themes and ideas together. Our recent Mothering Sunday service took a different slant on mothers, as we linked it with Mother Earth and how the Earth looks after us as we should look after Earth (I hope your sunflowers are growing). We had some lovely feedback from that, and our Palm Sunday service.

A lot of work and effort go into our local arrangements and I would like to take the opportunity to say a very big thank you to Heather and Sandra who are so good at sourcing material for our local arrangements.

I would like to thank Tilly and Philip (and Soo) for their support and to Sandra, who is still a great support to me as Head Steward sharing her experience and expertise from when she was in the role. A quote she told me just the other day, "you're always on duty as head steward", and she is quite right!

I also have a couple of extra responsibilities within the Circuit, including being part of the HR team, writing and checking contracts and ensuring we are following employment law for the Circuit employees. I am also on the Circuit Tech team, advising and helping with AV systems, but mainly website updates etc.

I had the privilege of being on the stationing committee for selecting our new Minister. A lot of meetings and discussions via Zoom and in-person making our selection and then presenting to District. We were extremely lucky to be matched at the first stationing and look forward to welcoming and working with our new Minister in September 2026\*.

Natalie Thompson

\*(subject to Conference approval in early July).

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## AUDIO VISUAL SYSTEM

Like many churches today, the audio-visual (AV) system plays a vital role in worship. From projecting hymn lyrics to ensuring sound carries clearly throughout the worship area, it supports the congregation's ability to participate fully. Hopefully, for the majority of the time it runs seamlessly but sometimes, behind the scenes it can bring its own challenges - the AV system is not just for an hour on a Sunday, and the preparation begins midweek when the order of service is received, and it's a good few hours work to prepare the slides.

Having no regular organist presents its own challenges and it is often difficult to adapt or amend any hymn to the recorded music we have available to us - so after some to-ing and fro-ing to the preacher, a decision is made as to what we present on the slides for the service. It's not so easy when it's a "miss out verse 4", or "repeat the chorus" request.

Adding any video's required presents its own additional challenges, finding the right version (with words) and downloading safely to the PC to enable them to play seamlessly (without those annoying ad's).

Arriving early before worship, to make sure everything is switched on and working is essential. We have been known to have a quick dash home to get a lead, another set of batteries or even another computer!

**What can you do?** Timing is everything, and we would ask that you please listen to the music and watch the screen carefully - during the previous week's prep we've listened to the music and fitted it to the words. Coming in too soon can spoil the remainder of the hymn, as it breaks the connection between the words and the melody. Coming in too late disrupts the natural rhythm of the hymn.

Adjusting "live" during a service is almost impossible - we don't have the ability to alter the tempo of the music like an organist can adjust their playing. The only thing we can do is turn the music up louder for you to try and adapt your singing speed or we can stop the whole thing and start again.

Operating the AV system is not difficult when it works! It calls for concentration, effective non-verbal communication between us and the preacher and even though largely unnoticed, it is an important part of Ministry, one that supports the congregation's engagement and helps create a seamless and meaningful worship.

The effectiveness of an AV system is not measured by how much it is seen, but by how little it distracts. When everything goes well, it allows the focus to remain where it belongs: on the message, the music, and the act of worship itself.

If you would like to join a rota for operating the system on a Sunday, please let us know, as we would like to have more people trained to ease the burden and cover for holidays/illness etc.

Natalie and Janet Thompson

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## CUPPA AND CHATTA



Back in the summer of 2020, when things started to be relaxed after the first Covid lockdown a group of friends met in our garden for tea and chat. At the time we never considered it would be for more than one summer. But the next year, and more restrictions on social distancing, we continued with the teas in the garden. Looking back at a photo taken at one of those teas, it is poignant to reflect on who was there but is no longer with us!

Out of these occasions we felt that there was a need for people to meet, and Cuppa and Chatta evolved, meeting for most of the year on the third Wednesday, with a small regular group.

Sadly Adrian and Sue no longer feel able to organise the gathering each month.

However the good news is, we understand, that there still will be Cuppa and Chatta organised on a rota basis for and by those who would still like to meet. As we step aside we wish the group well.

Adrian and Sue

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## LADIES CIRCLE

It's that time of year again, doesn't time fly by.

Ladies Circle has run a little differently this last year, with the resignation of our speaker secretary we were unable to find anyone willing to take the job on, it is a huge task so I can understand why no-one wanted to do it.

We were left with two options to finish the group altogether or for different people to step up and organise a meeting. We all felt we wanted to keep the group going so that is what we decided. We also decided that we would not have a dedicated charity this year as running fundraisers was getting arduous and we are not getting any younger! So we have had a collection at each meeting and a charity will be decided on at the end of the year, Currently the amount stands at £108.

It has been an interesting programme, we have tried our hands at Water Colour painting, Chair Yoga and Christmas Craft. Taxed our brains with a Quiz, Call My Bluff and Bingo. We have had talks from An Airport Chaplin, The Air Ambulance, Barrow Heritage Group, and shared things on the Theme of Spring. We have been out for 2 meals and shared Advent thoughts and a Christmas party. We have Easter thoughts coming up and 6 more meetings to look forward to. Many thanks to the people who organised a meeting/meetings and hopefully we can encourage more for the coming year.

Sadly we lost our long time member, Coral, we shared some of our memories of her with each other and her name often crops up at our meetings.

Cards and flowers have been sent to sick members along with our good wishes for a speedy recovery and return to our meetings. There are still question marks over the way the group goes forward and hopefully we can resolve these at our AGM and continue to meet in friendship and fellowship in the future.

Diane Cave

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## CHURCH FLOWERS

Donations from the orange envelopes that are out at communion services are used to purchase some flowers. If you would like to put flowers in church to mark a special occasion please let Tilly have some money a few weeks before.

After worship the flowers are then taken to someone in need of a hug!

Tilly Yates



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## ↓RIDE+STRIDES



In September we participated in the annual Ride and Stride event organised by the Leicestershire Historic Churches Trust, visiting 14 interesting churches in Leicester city to raise £485 in sponsor money which was divided between the Historic Churches Trust and our church.

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

This year Ride and Stride will be on September 12<sup>th</sup> and will have people taking part again.

Peter Yates

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## CROCHET AND CRAFT



We usually meet in the Welcome Coffee Bar on the third Saturday of the month from 2.00 to 4.00 pm - cost £2.00 per session.

We have knitting, crochet and embroidery at the moment with people bringing their own work to do at their own pace.

Drinks and biscuits are provided.

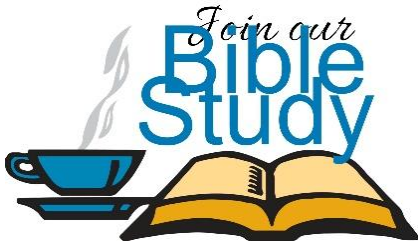
We do make progress with our work respite the chatter and laughter which always happens.

Tilly Yates

## YARN BOMBING

We did get some work done on the bollard covers and they were out for Easter. We did hope to get more done but life got in the way! If you feel you could help in this area then please have a word with Janet, Kate, Natalie or Tilly.

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We are a small, informal group who meet on alternate Thursday evenings to look at the scriptures together, not for deep, theological study but more for general discussion and to support and encourage each other in our faith.

Heather has kindly been looking online for material for us to use, which among other things has included an insightful look into the Beatitudes and some very interesting studies on Abraham, as well as some Lent studies which we are exploring at the time of writing.

We would be happy to have more of you join us at these meetings, either on a regular basis or just occasionally as time permits. If you would like to know more please have a word with me or Heather or watch the notices for details of the meetings.

Sandra Webb

The very practice of reading the Bible will have a purifying effect upon your mind and heart. Let nothing take the place of this daily exercise.

Billy Graham'

## Music Group

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

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

Peter and Edd



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We have not received any children in our Church to be christened recently. Previous members of our Cradle Roll have now moved out of the village. We are pleased that some do remain in contact still and although we do not see them, they remain in our Prayers.

Kate Morley

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## WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

In an increasingly digital world, I read an interesting (online) article about the importance of a church having an online presence. The key points, which I believe relate to our own online presence were as follows,

*The website acts as a Digital Front Door - for many people, the first interaction they have with a church is not by walking through its physical doors, but by visiting its website. A clear, welcoming, and informative website acts as a "digital front door," offering a first impression of the church's identity, mission, values, and community life. Worship times, location, and contact information should be easy to find, helping newcomers feel informed and confident about visiting in person.*

*A church building has limited capacity, but the internet can reach far beyond its walls. Through a website, social media, and online content, we can reach individuals who may never otherwise attend - whether due to distance, illness or curiosity.*

*An online presence is not just for newcomers and visitors; it is also there for existing members and supports the congregation. A website can provide updates on events, ministries, and announcements. It becomes a hub for communication, helping members stay connected throughout the week. Resources such as the annual report and the weekly notices can always be found for reference and understanding.*

*Ultimately, a church's online presence is a powerful tool for outreach. It provides a platform to promote outreach initiatives and communicate the activities within the church throughout the year. Even a simple message, picture or bible quote shared online can act as encouragement just as someone may need it.*

After reading the article, I hope that our online presence provides these key points described above. We know we reach others as our email traffic and social media interaction is apparent in keeping our friends, former (and future) Ministers who live away engaged and informed on our activities and mission.

The website will be revamped and updated over the coming weeks due to hosting platform changes, this will be a few days' work to rebuild on the new platform (the hosts can do it for us for a cost of £750 !!), but it is something that we can do ourselves but may just take a little longer!

The website is only as good as the content, so please can the leaders of the groups ensure that they let us know if there are any changes to their meeting times and groups, so that we can keep the calendar page up to date as much as possible.

Our following on Facebook is over 300 people now (Jesus has more, I know), and we do get a lot of interaction through the page from locals and people further afield. Every month we receive an enquiry through Facebook about minimarket. Other enquires, regarding services, baptisms, events and room bookings etc come through the website.

Obviously, there are safeguarding and GDPR rules for anything online but if you have ideas of anything you'd like to see on our online platforms, please let me know and we can discuss.

Thanks – Natalie Thompson

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## PROPERTY REPORT

We have this year changed supplier for our annual fire checks of alarms, fire blankets, extinguishers and emergency lights following the practice of sharing good practices throughout the circuit, our new supplier has been recommended following his excellent work at Mountsorrel, Woodhouse Eaves and Quorn. We are arranging also for a professional review our Fire Risk Policy.

We have also arranged for improved lighting in the car park to help both security and drivers collecting vehicles in the dark.

Ian Bruce has completed repairs to the roof above the entrance door and Welcome coffee bar which we believe will prevent further water leaks inside the building.

I would like to thank Janet, Peter and Mike for their help and contribution in ensuring the Church is ready and fit for all the groups and users of the property. Peter is often seen around with his box of tools ready to sort any issues as they occur and all his help in this area is really appreciated.



Trevor Ranson

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## A MEET WITH GOD

A little boy wanted to meet God. He knew it was a long trip to where God lived, so he packed his suitcase with Kit Kats and a six-pack of Sprite and he started his journey.

When he had gone about three blocks, he met an old man. He was sitting in the park just staring at some pigeons. The boy sat down next to him and opened his suitcase. He was about to take a drink when he noticed that the old man looked hungry, so he offered him a Kit Kat. He gratefully accepted it and smiled at him. His smile was so pleasant that the boy wanted to see it again, so he offered him a Sprite.

Again, he smiled at him. The boy was delighted! They sat there all afternoon eating and smiling, but they never said a word. As it grew dark, the boy realized how tired he was and he got up to leave, but before he had gone more than a few steps, he turned around, ran back to the old man, and gave him a hug. He gave him his biggest smile ever.

When the boy opened the door to his own house a short time later, his mother was surprised by the look of joy on his face. She asked him, "What did you do today that made you so happy?" He replied, "I had lunch with God." But before his mother could respond, he added, "You know what? He's got the most beautiful smile I've ever seen!"

Meanwhile, the old man, also radiant with joy, returned to his home. His son was stunned by the look of peace on his face and he asked, "Dad, what did you do today that made you so happy?"

He replied, "I ate Kit Kats in the park with God." However, before his son responded, he added, "You know, he's much younger than I expected."

Too often we underestimate the power of a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring.

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## Treasurer's Report



The accounts to the end of our last financial year 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 31/8/25 was £28,253, approximately £500 above last year, and we have now fully repaid the loan from the Circuit.

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

- a) Letting our premises, which is slightly less (4%) than last year, but remains our major source of income.
- b) Regular giving at services via cash and by standing orders, which has increased slightly
- c) From the monthly 'minimarkets' which brought in £3547, almost twice the amount they made in the previous year. This more than makes up for the loss of income from the November Fair, which was not held for various reasons. The income from minimarkets goes to the Property Development Fund which is used for major expenditure such as purchase of the copier, new flooring in the back coffee bar, repair of leaking roofs such as the present work on the parapet above the window in the Welcome Coffee Bar.

**Expenditure increases every year and comprises mainly;**

**a)** Annual costs which include the Assessment, (to pay for Ministers, their manses and other costs associated with the Methodist Connexion), church insurance, mandatory testing and servicing equipment, regular maintenance. This expenditure does not depend much on use of the building, usually increases slightly each year.

**b)** variable costs associated with the amount buildings are used, these being gas, electricity, cleaning, running repairs, additional cleaning etc. These usually increase each year especially fuel charges. Currently church income is enough to pay the assessment and the fixed costs, but other costs such as charitable donations, fuel, cleaning and routine maintenance costs rely on the income from lettings.

**Charitable Giving.**

Last year we gave £2113 to external charities, (before sending gift aid) which included £796 to the foodbank. This was collected by special appeals at services. Support for charities in this way will continue. In addition to this the Church Council agreed in February that this year we would again donate £500 each to Action for Children, Methodist Homes and All We Can. We continue to donate to the Foodbank with coffee donations received at Sunday services and monthly minimarkets.

**Offerings and Gift Aid**

Last year report offerings did increase by 1.5% to £15037 Thank you everyone for your continued support.

Gift Aid amounted to £3412

This year they 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 can 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 can provide a set of 52 dated envelopes, each having its own number, for weekly offerings, which can be 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 steward, the amount in the envelope is recorded with the envelope number, 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 a valuable resource for the village and are widely 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**

**Members from the churches in the village continue to meet and organise events for you to share**

It has been another eventful year for Churches Together with joint services and events. The Lent lunches were well attended and culminated in a Good Friday Service in the Methodist Church followed by lunch. The money raised from all the Lent lunches in 2026 will be donated to the Streetlight Trust in the Philippines.

Events planned for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity are:

Thursday 14 May	7.30 pm	Ascension Day Service at Walton on the Wolds
Friday 15 May	10.00 am	Methodist Church
Saturday 16 May	10.00 am to 12.00 pm	Ecumenical prayer space at Holy Trinity
Sunday 17 May	10.00 am	Baptist Church
Monday 18 May	9.30 am	Holy Trinity Church
Tuesday 19 May	10.30 am	Baptist Church
Wednesday 20 May	10.00 am	Methodist Church

A Pet Blessing service will be held on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September at Holy Trinity Church.

If you have any queries and would like to know more then please see one of our representatives Heather Doda, Pauline Ranson or Tilly Yates.

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We have 15-20 children aged 0-15 years attending F@C with their parents, grandparents, carers and friends.

As the children arrive boisterously from school we welcome them with a snack and a drink. We hear about what has happened at school, how they feel. One of the children will say "Grace".

Each session follows a particular theme. Some of which can be quite challenging. With prayer and the activities chosen, we try to unfold the ideas in ways so that the children will have an illustrated knowledge to take away in their minds. The many craft activities they physically take home enables them to share the ideas with others. We have lots of fun, make lots of noise and make a lot of mess.

Some of the themes we have tackled this last year are:

**"Is God Real?- Remember me."**

**Luke 24:13-43**

Jesus told the disciples to spread "Peace and Love". We made "erupting paint". We painted our masterpieces, then watched how the paint spread as we added bicarb. and vinegar. Some of the effects were amazing. To illustrate Jesus saying, "I am the Way", we made a maze with obstacles and the children had to overcome them on their way. We talked about how we could get help from our friends to make the best choices do the best thing. Jesus is our friend and we can ask him to help us make the best choices with obstacles in our life.

**"Who is the Holy Spirit?"**

**Acts 2: 1-13**

We began with a parachute game as we remembered that the Holy Spirit was present at the beginning of Creation, hovering over the waters. We made "breath powered boats" and "a ping pong blow ball game" and origami flying doves of prayer to illustrate that the Holy Spirit cannot be seen, but we can see the effect of its power. We talked about Pentecost and how the Holy Spirit came to the disciples, then how they spread God's word. The children made their own collages, used parachute play and made LEGO models to show different way we can spread God's Word.

**"Being kind to all people "**

**Leviticus 19: 9-10 Ruth 2: 1-9**

We discussed that God is telling us not to be greedy, but to be generous and kind to others. We hope you saw our examples on the tables at the back of the Worship Area, the safe school, a good classroom and a fun playground. The children had put a lot of thought into those. They also made the Prayer trees and friendship bracelets to give away. We spoke about the charity, "Street Child".

**"How can I be a Peacemaker?"**

**Samuel 25: 4-34**

The children were well aware of Remembrance Day and the value of peace. We made a Tin Can telephone for communication and flying Peace Prayer Doves. Our artwork was bubble marbling pictures and we were amazed that something so beautiful could come from a mess. We talked about how we could keep peace in our lives.

**“Love - how does this grow?”**

**Luke 15:11-32**

We used our large puppets to illustrate the story of the “Prodigal Son”. We made money and a Magic Wallet and talked about how money can be spent recklessly or wisely. We tossed pancakes achieving more success as we practised. The physical challenges and “feeding the pigs” game, using wet sponges, improved as we persevered, practised and showed determination to reach our goals. It’s like following Jesus; there are challenges in our lives to overcome.

**“Integrity - Stand up and be counted”**

**Daniel 3:13-25**

We used our puppets again to illustrate the story of King Nebuchadnezzar ordering Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to be thrown into the fiery furnace as they refused to worship his golden statue. They stood up for their beliefs in God and this had a profound effect on the King. We made “foamy flames” pictures using paint and shaving foam. Our “fiery furnace lamp” showed the 4 figures in the furnace, untouched by the flames, as God was with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

We often use our snacks as illustrations for our stories. The Jammy Dodger biscuits, with the red jam in the centre, remind us of the fiery furnace and the integrity of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. We made Pig Face Biscuits using a digestive biscuit, icing, marshmallows and chocolate drops for the story of the Prodigal Son. We ate this biscuit and enjoyed it, but we noted that then it had gone and would not return, but God’s love never goes. It is always with us.

Our sessions close with bubbles to help us focus on our prayers and our action songs of praise.

We thoroughly enjoy working with the children. We ask you to remember them, their families, and the Leaders, young and old, in your prayers.

Kate, Heather, Janet, Mike and Katie.

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## **NEW HORIZONS**

*A friendship group for those who have been bereaved*

We continue to welcome new members to the group. The welcome is always warm and empathetic. Friendships are made, giving support and comfort, through the activities and by talking to others who understand.

We have a very varied programme throughout the year, stimulated by the suggestions of the group.

We were delightfully entertained by the Barrow upon Soar Ukulele Band singing along to all the songs, bringing back memories of our youth.

The Afternoon Tea and Gentle Country Dancing, led by Diane and Mike Bird, surprised our members. They were amazed how they were able to take part and how much they could do. Those who chose to watch added to the fun by giving marks for the dancing “Strictly Style.”

The Summer Outing was a great treat, as always. We cruised along the River Soar in the Peter Le Marchant Trust boat, “Symphony.” We enjoyed refreshments and the beautiful views of our local countryside and fascinating wildlife, on the way to “The Waterside,” at Mountsorrel. We had a delicious meal before the return cruise to Loughborough, chatting all the way.

Les Cope- Newman, of “Four in a bed” fame, entertained us with his stories of what goes on behind the scenes, while making the TV programme. He arrived at our meeting with a business task/game for us to do, linking his roles as a Freeman of Loughborough and “Mr. Loughborough,” but he obliged the request from the ladies for more stories from the TV programme. Thanks Les.

We had a very interesting “Virtual Tour” and information of the workings of The House of Lords by Baroness of Cotes, Nicky Morgan. Nicky really explained so much and answered our many questions that our knowledge and understanding soared.

We celebrated Harvest and gave thanks by singing hymns and having a Harvest reading. We brought non-perishable food to be donated to the local Food Store. The leaders thanked us as they were very grateful for our donations.

Our Annual All Souls’ Service was led by Rev. Pat Olivant-Hayes. We had prayers, poems and a talk before lighting candles for those we have lost. This service took place at 1.30 pm, before our usual meeting time, thus enabling members to choose if they wished to take part.

Kat led us in a very active "Chair Aerobics" session called "How to keep Fit and Mobile." This was really good fun and showed us how much we can still do! The enthusiasm was so great that there was a request to include it in the next programme.

Our Christmas Lunch at The Soar Bridge Inn was a joy. The food, service and the company of friends was excellent. We were delighted to be entertained, after the meal, by the group of saxophonists, Sax Munde, playing some of their repertoire.

We began 2026 with a Party. We played a variety of games, attempted challenges, sang, ate and laughed a lot.

Bob and Mel brought an eclectic collection of "Bits and Bobs" -some things new, some things old, some things wooden and some things gold. We were asked to handle the articles and suggest what they were and their uses. We had a varied amount of success. It was fun and some articles really brought back memories and provided a lot of discussion. Sax Munde," the group of saxophonists, returned to entertain us in a very enjoyable afternoon of music and singing.

We are always ready to welcome new members. The most difficult thing is walking through the door. You are promised a warm and understanding welcome as soon as you arrive.

Through experiencing exercise, singing, listening to music, laughing, learning new things, drinking tea/coffee, eating cake, making friends with those who understand how you feel and having time to talk, all help us to find new horizons.

Thank you to Pauline, Janet, Mike and Trevor for all your help and support.

Kate Morley

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## SHARING SCRIPTURE

Discover • Jesus • Together

This ecumenical scripture sharing group has now been meeting on Monday evenings in the Methodist Welcome Coffee Lounge for over two years and is still going strong. We all very much enjoy and appreciate this time of quiet reflection on the scriptures, but we would love for more of you to come along to join us and try it for yourselves.

At the moment there are eight or ten regulars, mostly Methodists and Catholics, but it is open to all and we do have others who join us from time to time when circumstances allow.

This isn't a traditional bible study, but we follow the Seven Steps approach to the scriptures which means that it is easy for any of us to lead, and after reading the selected passage from two different translations we spend time quietly reflecting and contemplating what the Lord might be saying to us. We then have the opportunity to share with the group anything that may have resonated with us personally, or maybe something we may not have noticed before.

We always close by remembering those who need our prayers and then join together in something familiar to all such as the Lord's prayer.

If you would like to know more about what we do please have a word with Simon, Heather, Joyce or Sandra, or just come along on a Monday evening at 7.30pm to find out for yourself. You would be most welcome.

Sandra Webb

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## CHURCH GARDEN AND CAR PARK

We continue to look after the church garden and car park. It has become much easier now the fence has been replaced between ourselves and the Conservative Club.

The rambling rose which collapsed in 2024 is doing well as are all the other plants. The church garden does seem to be in a sort of microclimate, probably due to being enclosed by the high walls. Even in the hottest weather, it seems not to need any watering.



Which is just as well, because the water butt (which was obtained second hand) has now split and is beyond repair. However, as we never need to use it there is no need to replace it. It will be decommissioned and taken away in due course.

There are plans to revarnish the benches and some of the other woodwork over the better weather.

Thanks to Peter and Tilly for the help they provide, particularly in taking all the garden waste down to the tip.

Philip and Carolyn Thornborow



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For those who may be unaware, we have a prayer chain available to any who may be in need of a little extra prayer at any time. This is separate from the Sunday prayer list and might be used for emergencies which arise during the week, or for personal requests which people might not necessarily want to be shared with the whole church.

All requests are kept confidential within the group unless we are told otherwise, and we don't need to know any more details than you are comfortable sharing.

If you feel in need of prayer at any time, just tell Heather or Sandra that you have a request for the prayer chain and we will pass the message along. If you have an urgent request but don't have our contact details, please ask Janet.

It is always a privilege to be asked for prayer, and if you feel called to be a part of this ministry please have a word with me about 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



# MEN'S SUPPER GROUP



The Men's Supper group continues 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." We are all grateful to Peter, Trevor and Adrian for the meals they have provided and to Andy for providing desserts. We are very pleased that Graham has volunteered to cook for us in the next year.

To take the pressure off the "chefs" we have started to visit eating places in the village and then come back to the Church Coffee Bar for our activities. When we started thirteen years ago we were cooking 7/8 times each year but we have now moved on to three meals cooked at Church.

Our 2025/26 programme has continued to be varied in the activities, locations and starting times.

In September we walked around the village and finished at The Moorings for a meal. We had a talk from Peter Cantle and John Winterton on "Medical Aid in Rural Africa" which is provided by the Inter Care charity based in Syston. We had a very interesting evening stone painting led by Derrick after a meal at The Three Crowns. The men were silent in this activity and produced some very interesting artwork.

We had our Christmas Meal at the Soar Bridge Inn this time. After "fish and chips" another very interesting evening was "Who do you think I am" when four of our group told us about their life from childhood to twenty. Les Cope Newman gave us a talk on "Four in a Bed" and Rob and Del Neil introduced us to sorting out "Bits and Bobs" and then we got active on our Skittle Evening at the Conservative Club.

In May we will be going to Peter's for a barbeque and to play Pétanque and then in June we'll be having our "very different meeting" when we invite our wives, partners and friends to join us on our Peter Le Marchant Trust Boat trip from Loughborough to Mountsorrel which will give a very different outlook to Barrow upon Soar.

Our membership has remained stable at eighteen but we would like to increase it so if any of you know anyone you think might be interested and we could approach, then please speak with Mike, Peter, Adrian or Trevor.

Mike Morley

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## MINIMARKET

Our Minimarket and Coffee Morning continue on the first Saturday of every month from 10.00 to 11.00 am.

The queue starts just before 9.30 am and some friends come for a bargain, some for coffee and some just for company and everyone is welcome.

We are grateful to Yvonne for continuing to take our electrical items to sell and to Pat Mitchell and Tilly who supply us with delicious looking cakes every month. Also on offer are clothes, bric a brac, toys, books, greeting cards, haberdashery, succulents/plants and sometimes a raffle.



We do offer a free stall to any registered local charity so if you know someone who would like to join us on one Saturday morning then please ask them to contact [barrowmeths@gmail.com](mailto:barrowmeths@gmail.com), or speak to Janet.

Our thanks go to our "staff" Carol, Estelle, Jo, Joan, Kate, Kathryn, Mike, Natalie, Pat A, Pat L, Pauline F, Peter, Soo and Tilly and to all our friends who support us by coming every month.

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

We look forward to seeing you.

Janet Thompson



# 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 12<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2026

PUBLIC VIEWING: 2.30 – 4.00 pm

Refreshments available

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



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## SOME FUNNIES!

Freddy goes to the Church and listens to the preacher. After a while, the preacher asks anyone with needs to be prayed over to come forward. Freddy goes up and the preacher asks, "Freddy, what do you want me to pray about for you?" "Preacher," says Freddy, I need you to pray for my hearing."



The preachers put one finger in Freddy's ear and he places the other hand on top of Freddy's head and prays and prays. After a few minutes, the preacher removes his hands and stands back, "Freddy, how is your hearing now?" "I don't know, Reverend," says Freddy. "My hearing's not until next Wednesday."

**A doctor was asked how they decided whether** or not an older person should be in care home?"

"Well," he said, "we fill up a bathtub, then we offer a teaspoon, a teacup and a bucket to the person to empty the bathtub."

"Oh, I understand," I said. "A normal person would use the bucket Because it is bigger than the spoon or the teacup."

"No" he said. "A normal person would pull the plug."

**A teacher** asked her Sunday School group to draw pictures of their favourite Bible stories. She was puzzled by Patsy's picture, which showed four people on an airplane, so she asked him which story it was meant to represent.

"The flight to Egypt," said Patsy. "I see ... And that must be Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus," the teacher said. "But who's the fourth person?" "Oh, that's Pontius-the Pilot."

A father was approached by his small son who told him proudly, "I know what the Bible means!" His father smiled and replied, "What do you mean, you 'know' what the Bible means?" The son replied, "I do know!" (Okay," said his father. "What does the Bible mean?" "That's easy, Daddy," the young boy replied excitedly," "It stands for 'Basic Information Before Leaving Earth.'"

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## **HAVE YOU EVER ASKED SOMEONE TO SAY GRACE AND WONDERED WHAT THEY WOULD SAY?**

A pastor asked an older farmer, decked out in bib overalls, to say Grace for the morning breakfast. "Lord, I hate buttermilk," the farmer began.

The visiting Pastor opened one eye to glance at the farmer and wonder where this was going!

The farmer loudly proclaimed, "Lord, I hate lard." Now the pastor was growing concerned.

Without missing a beat, the farmer continued, "And Lord you know I don't much care for raw white flour."

The pastor once again opened an eye to glance around the room and saw that he wasn't the only one to feel uncomfortable.

Then the farmer added, "But Lord, when you mix them all together and bake them, I do love warm fresh biscuits. So Lord, when things come up that we don't like, when life gets hard, when we don't understand what you're saying to us, help us to just relax and wait until you are done mixing. It will probably be even better than biscuits. Amen."

## **SOME MORNINGS**

Some mornings don't come with peace.

They come with a full mind, a heavy chest and a quiet list of worries waiting before your feet even touch the ground.

The "what ifs." The "what now."

The things you can't fix, can't control, can't even fully understand.

And for a moment, it feels like you have to carry all of it.

But then... you pause.

Not because everything suddenly makes sense, but because deep down, you remember something simple - not everything is yours to hold.

People will be people.

They'll misunderstand, they'll disappoint, they'll act in ways you can't change.

Jobs will be jobs. Some days will feel stable, others uncertain and sometimes things won't go the way you planned.

Life will keep moving in ways that don't always ask for your permission.

And you?

You don't have to fight every single thing. You don't have to stress over every outcome or carry every burden like it's yours alone.

Because there's a quiet truth that brings a different kind of peace—

God will always be God.

Unchanging. Steady. Present even when everything else feels unpredictable.

And when you hold onto that something shifts inside you.

You breathe a little easier. You loosen your grip on things that were never meant to be controlled.

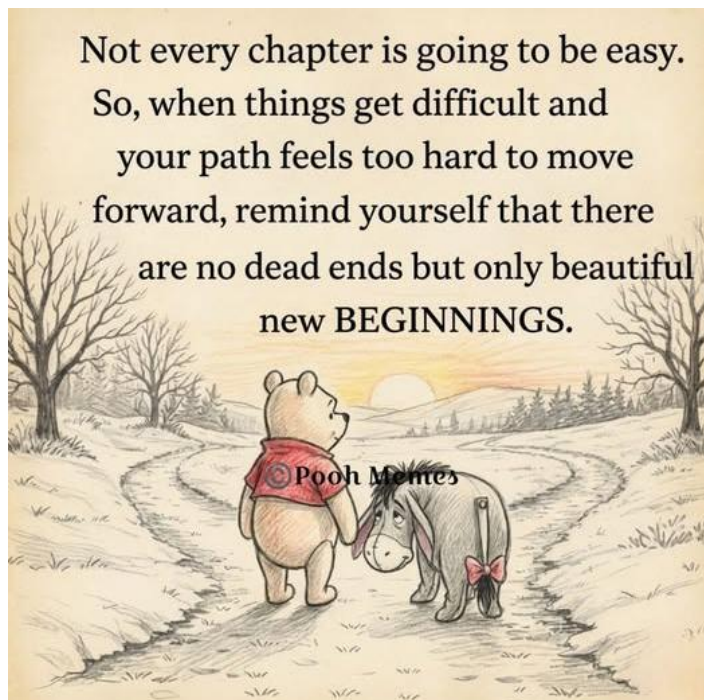
You start to trust that even if you don't have all the answers, you're still being held.

So today, maybe it's not about having a perfect plan.

Maybe it's just about choosing peace, one thought at a time.

Letting go where you need to.

Trusting where you can't see.  
And reminding yourself gently - you don't have to carry the whole world... because you're already being carried.



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