

# CONTACT

The monthly magazine of

Groby

United Reformed Church



September 2024

# Happy Birthday

*William Ward has a birthday in September!*

*Happy Birthday William*

*May the Good Lord Bless You*

Sue Lawrence-Brooks



## **Print or Hard Copy of Contact?**

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If you receive a paper copy and no longer wish to, please let us know through the magazine email address.

**Our Church website** can be found at <https://grobyurc.com/>

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**A link to recordings of our services can be found on both our church Website (click on the ‘worship’ Tab at the top) and on our Facebook page.**

# CONTENTS

YChurch Birthdays	2
Elders Welcome Letter	4
A Look at what the Homegroups are doing - this month - the Wednesday afternoon group	5
Teaching & Readings for September / Helping Hands	6 / 7
Teaching for New Year 2025	8
News of Autumn 2024 Alpha Course	9
'A Spoonful of Sugar..' How Fairtrade helps the Sugar Cane Farmers, and how we can help!	10
'Be The Change' - Celebrating 30 years of Fairtrade	11
Funtastic Fridays on Friday Afternoons!	12
Groby URC Prayers	13
I could do that - Volunteers needed	17
Julian Meetings go into their second year	18
Crossfire - a change of Venue	19
What a lot of rubbish - a Litter Picking venture	20
'Groby Sings' Comes of Age	21
News from the West Leicestershire Churches	24
Pause for Thought	26
Foodbank Thankyou	26
Diary Dates	27
Church contacts	28



## WELCOME FROM MARGARET CHURCH ELDER



Hello Everyone,

My heart actually sank when I was reminded it was my turn to write a piece for the September Contact. I started by searching past newsletters and soon decided I couldn't write anything like others had written before me.

Then the Lord spoke to my heart: *Margaret, I didn't make you to try and be like other people; all I want is for you to be yourself and speak of concepts that are part of you.*

Possibly, some of you may not be aware that my Dad's family have been Groby butchers for some considerable time. For many years Dad and a farmer friend kept sheep in the fields that stretched to Ratby and surrounded the Chapel. When my brother and I were children, we had the job of counting the sheep and checking they were in good order.

On one particular occasion when it was foggy and you couldn't see a hand in front of you, all the sheep had wandered off and we were tasked with leading them back to the farm. We tried really hard to usher them back through the opening, we cajoled, waved and clapped, but because they couldn't see the other side, they were having non of it. Suddenly, one sheep decided to go for it and leapt high in the air over an imaginary gate, followed by the rest of the flock, returning to safe pastures.

How many times dear friends, has the Lord led us in ways of darkness, where we fear to walk because we cannot see the way ahead? Jesus, the good shepherd asks us not to fear, but have faith in His guidance; for He will hold our hand in times of great need and carry us in His loving arms.

May God bless you all and could you remember to take a leap of faith – you will be amazed where the Lord will lead you.

*Margaret*

## A look at what the homegroups are doing!

### This month - Wednesday Afternoon Homegroup.

The Wednesday afternoon home group has eight members (self included) and is well attended. We meet fortnightly at the home of Barbara and Headley

The session starts with prayer and I then introduce the topic together with any background information. Overtime we have chosen a variety of topics, some one off or a theme lasting a number of sessions. At the present time we are working from a study guide covering the ten commandments, working backwards from the tenth commandment. Each commandment spans two sessions, starting first with the aspect from the old testament and secondly new testament. The guide book poses a number of questions, as an aid to promoting discussion, and to keep us focussed.

We aim to keep the study to an hour, followed by tea and biscuits and a chat. A very relaxed atmosphere. At this time I am sometimes accused of taking relaxation to far.

*Jim*



## TEACHING AND READINGS FOR SEPTEMBER 2024

- |                   |                                                                                                                                                 |               |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Sept. 1st</b>  | <b>Matthew 21 vv 12-22<br/>(Turning the tables)</b>                                                                                             | John Coffey   |
| <b>Sept. 8th</b>  | <b>Matthew 21 vv23-45<br/>(Parables of the two sons and<br/>of the tenants)</b><br><br><b>This service includes sharing<br/>Holy Communion.</b> | Paul          |
| <b>Sept. 15th</b> | <b>Altogether Service - Harvest</b>                                                                                                             | Richard Knott |
| <b>Sept. 22nd</b> | <b>Matthew 22 vv1-14<br/>(I cannot come to the feast)</b>                                                                                       | Syd Henderson |
| <b>Sept. 29th</b> | <b>Matthew 22 vv 15-22<br/>(Maker's mark)</b>                                                                                                   | Paul          |

We continue through Matthew's Gospel, apart from September 15th when there will be an 'Altogether Service'.

The focus that day will be 'Harvest' when all ages are welcomed to all of the service. After the service there is a BBQ for the families of y.church, Crossfire, Tasters and Under the Willow Tree."

## September's Helping Hands

	<b>Elder</b>	<b>Music</b>	<b>Media</b>	<b>Welcome</b>	<b>Coffee</b>
<b>Sept.</b>	(Mary)	(Trevor)	(Barry)	(Joy)	(Joy)
1st	Mary	Debbie / Trevor	Chris	Elaine & John	Hilary & Dave
8th	Margaret	Helen / Trevor	Barry	Alan & Judith	Mary & Trevor
15th	Sue	David	Mark	Elsie & Pete	Pat & Linda
22nd	Phil	Trevor	Dave	Rachel H & Margaret	Ruth & Roger
29th	Mark	Sue / Trevor	Chris	Linda & Hilary	Peter & Helper required.



**Sunday Flowers**  
(Barbara Conlon)

Sept 1st: Margaret Chaplin  
 Sept 8th : Kay Blick  
 Sept 15th : Pete & Elsie  
 Sept 22nd: Anne Brandon  
 Sept 29th: Barbara Conlon

**“The Clean Team!”**

(Kathy Du Boulay)



Week Beginning  
 Sept 2nd: Our Chores  
 Sept 9th: Joy & Pat  
 Sept 16th: Our Chores  
 Sept 23rd: Trevor & Mary  
 Sept 30th: Our Chores



## TEACHING FOR NEW YEAR 2025

Now it is September and the new school year, let's look ahead to our worship in the autumn and beyond...

- From September until November, we shall continue through Matthew's Gospel.
- In December we shall take Advent themes: maybe some from the Old Testament prophecies, but I have not really planned that yet.
- From January we shall respond to the suggestion at a Church Meeting that we have services about 'What is Church'. This will be a series called 'Holy Habits', based on the activities of the early Church listed in Acts chapter 2 verses 42 to 47 and using material from Andrew Roberts' book *Holy Habits* (published by Malcolm Down, 2016). This identifies from the Biblical text ten Habits that should be part of our life as a Church, from 'Biblical Teaching' to 'Making More Disciples'. My hope is that at least some of our five Home Groups will tie in with this material, with discussion questions provided. (I realise that Home Groups tend to meet fortnightly, which does not fit with a weekly sermon series, but we shall sort something out!)

May all that we offer on Sunday mornings help and inspire all in our mixed congregation and may the total, and our responses, give glory to God, Who alone is worthy of our worship!

Rev Paul.



# 'ALPHA' 2024

*" let's start at the very beginning "*

Another Alpha Course is planned with our Anglican friends for this Autumn on

**Thursday** evenings from 7pm to 9pm

September 19th & 26th

October 3rd, 10th & 17th

November 7th, 14th, 21st

***Saturday November 9th is the Away Day'***

The simple Alpha format will be followed:

- a hot meal together
- an interesting and lively DVD
- A group discussion on the DVD where all comments and opinions can be shared and questions asked.



**This is a golden opportunity to invite and accompany a friend, colleague or family member to find out what makes us Christians tick and to discover for themselves what Christians believe.**

Please speak to Paul or an Elder if you feel you can help in any way on one or more of these evenings.

**Planning meeting for all helpers at 6.30 on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September**

## **A Spoonful of Sugar..... or are you Sweet enough?**

“Fairtrade is like a door to a great opportunity within our community”, says Alfredo Ortega, Vice Chair of the Belize Sugar Cane Farmers Association.



“Investment ....is helping the cane farmers produce a higher quantity and quality of sugar cane increasing the incomes of farmers. Through the Fairtrade premium we have been able to promote education, build schools, health centres, clinics and much more. For us, Fairtrade has been a new beginning.”

But its not all sweetness and light for those not part of a Fairtrade Association. Sugar cane growing is a precarious occupation for most farmers because of difficult climate conditions and insufficient investment in cane replanting, fertilizers and pest and weed control. In recent years, farmers and communities have been hit by rising costs as well as by natural disasters. Unemployment levels have risen to around 9 per cent in the sugar growing areas of Belize and fewer children are now completing secondary education because their families are finding school fees, transport and meals unaffordable.

**Look out for the Fairtrade logo when next you need to buy some sugar?**



# BE THE CHANGE

Buy Fairtrade today



## FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT 9 - 22 SEPTEMBER 2024

This year is 30 years since Fairtrade products hit the shelves and being a Fairtrade church, we along with the Laundon Way Co-op are holding a small anniversary celebration on:



**SATURDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER AT TASTERS**

**Followed by more activities on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup>**

Grobby URC will be spotlighting how we can all **BE THE CHANGE** by actively choosing to support over 2 million Fairtrade farmers and workers across 58 countries, wherever possible, to ensure they can earn a fairer wage.

**Fairtrade  
CAKE**

**Fairtrade  
QUIZ**

**Fairtrade  
PRIZES**

Buying Fairtrade is easy. There are over 6,000 Fairtrade products from coffee and tea to flowers and wine. When you shop, look for the FAIRTRADE Mark.

# **WE NEED YOUR HELP**

## Funtastic Fridays



Due to the success of our  
Friday mornings, we are  
starting an after school  
club on Friday afternoons  
- can you help??

See Louise for more info



## September's Prayer Sheet

“Jeremiah 29:11“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”

Romans 12: 12

Welcome to our September prayer sheet.

With the summer holiday period coming to an end our focus for this issue is for activities and events we have coming up. This includes encouragement to pray for our children and young people as they return to school, the Altogether service, prayers for the new Alpha course starting and a focus on Fairtrade Fortnight which is also happening in September.

With such a busy month there's lots to pray for and a lot to give thanks for as well! Don't forget there are lots of other ideas for prayer throughout Contact so please don't feel limited by what's included here!

We would love to encourage as many people as possible to contribute to the prayer sheet, so if you have any topics you would like to get people praying for then please get in touch with Rachel Edwards to get them included in future sheets.

**Pray for the events planned in church celebrating Fairtrade Fortnight**, that the people attending Tasters on Saturday will become more engaged with the Fairtrade concept. Pray that the staff from the Laundon Way Co-op (Adrian & Craig) will feel welcome and relevant (see page 11 for more info)

**Pray for the Altogether Service on September 15th**, that many families will come along, taking away a message of Christian love. Pray for Richard Knot who is leading the service, and all involved in planning, that they will know God's guidance.

## Prayers for Alpha

Following the success of last year's Alpha course, we will once again be holding another course starting in September (details on pg 9). As with last year all the churches in Groby and Ratby will be coming together to put the course on for residents from both villages.

*Alpha* is a long-established course that introduces the participants to the beliefs of the Christian faith. Each evening comprises a meal together, watching a DVD and then discussion in small groups.

God has blessed it extensively in many countries of the World to bring innumerable people to know Christ.

Please pray:

- For all the guests who are attending our Alpha course, that every one will be open to listen to the views of others and recognise the truth of Christian claims.
- That every guest will be touched by God and draw closer to Him.
- For the Day Away in November.
- For the group facilitators, for sensitivity to allow discussions to flow and wisdom to know when to intervene.
- For the cooks from all four Churches who will make a major contribution by providing the dinners, at which relationships and friendships will be formed, facilitating later open discussions.
- For the four Churches and their clergy to continue to work together effectively for the Kingdom, to present a united Christian front in both villages.
- For the guests when the course has finished in late November, that they will find spiritual homes and continue on their journey of coming to know Christ.



## Prayers for Schools



With September comes the end of the school holidays and the return to school for children and teachers. It also brings with it the recommencement of most of our children's activities within Groby URC.

Let's spend some time this month praying for all the children and young people who are connected to our church in some way and those who work to support them both in church and at school.

Pray for:

- Those who are starting school for the first time or starting a new school.
- All those who may be nervous about going back to school
- Those for whom school may not be an easy place.
- All the children and young people who are connected to our church and the activities they come along too, including:

Y Church

Tasters

Noah's Ark

CATCH

Urban Saints

Pray for all the leaders who help run these groups.

Let's also pray for all those who are teachers or who work within schools, ask that God will be with them as they go about their day-to-day work and that He will bless them in everything they do with the children in their care.

## Fair Trade Fortnight - September 9th to 22nd.



Praying for Fair Trade allows us to bring trade issues before God, asking that God's love and justice will transform the rules and practices of trade. We pray that God will assist those suffering because of unfair trade ... those developing new ways of trading ... those making choices about what they sell or buy.

Pray that God will bless all who are involved with Fairtrade. Ask God to bless the producers in their endeavours as they grow their crops and craft their works. Ask God to grant them wisdom and discernment as they make decisions about how to use the benefits of Fairtrade.

Pray for those who are part of the Fairtrade chain of suppliers that enables us to buy Fairtrade items in our local shops.

Pray for those within the industry that, in these days of huge competitive pricing, prioritise having goods to buy that are fairly traded and / or ethically sourced. Pray that this will be valued and not lost in the name of creating maximum profit for those who already have enough.

God has given us enough land to feed our populations, yet many go hungry. He has given us wealth, yet we are often slow to share. He has given us the ability to look outwards and to see where others need help, but often we only look at our own lives.

Ask God to touch our eyes afresh during Fairtrade Fortnight and enable us to see what you have created. Ask God to help us nurture and care for all that lives on this beautiful planet we call home, seeking His wisdom as we make our own choices. Pray that God will help us to always seek justice and fairness for places and people and to make this world a better place



## I could do that !



Several of our Churches Together in Groby activities are in need of extra volunteers.

None of the tasks are difficult and just once a month would be welcome.

**Tasters** - Saturdays 10am —12noon. Serving hot drinks, hot cobs and cakes, chatting with visitors, helping with children's activities. Average attendance 50 people.

Split shifts can be arranged.

Contact Sue Lawrence-Brooks or Chris Davies

**Fair Cuppa** - Thursdays 10.30am - 12 noon . Making and serving hot drinks and cake. Chatting with people. Washing up. Average attendance 25 people. Contact Elizabeth Jarvis

**Catch** for preschool children - Fridays during term time. 9.30am - 11am. Getting toys out, making hot and cold drinks, chatting with people. Average attendance 12 parents, grandparents or carers with children. Contact Louise Brown or Ruth Scott

**Rock Solid** for young people in years 5—11

Fridays 7.30pm - 9pm during term time.

Helping prepare snacks / food . Being available to chat with young people. Average attendance 18 young people.

Contact Louise Brown or Ruth Scott



## **Julian Meetings in Groby go into their second year**

On the 6<sup>th</sup> September last year five of us gathered to share some silence at Groby Library. Due to a bit of miscommunication we actually sat outside the library on the benches. Funnily enough silence doesn't need to be silent! It was a very warm day, cars were going past and people were around but that didn't matter. After a few words, conversation ceased for 20 minutes and we simply sat in silence.

Sitting in silence is a simple thing to do – something that you can easily do on your own. I imagine there are people who find this an easy thing to do: if there are, I am certainly not one of them! My mind can seem to become busier in the silence or, if I can relax, it can drift off towards sleep. In spite of this I know that I gain something from sitting in silence – that something may be intangible, difficult to identify but it is there.

And science backs me up on that!

So, for the last year, a group of us has met on the first Monday of the month at 7:30 at Groby Community Library and shared silence for 20 minutes. And over the coming year we will do the same. The number of people has varied from 3 to 9: not always the same people. And this is to remind you that you are always welcome to join us. Whether this becomes a new routine, or you just want to try it once.

Julian Meetings have their roots in the Christian faith, but everyone is welcome, whatever your faith or belief. If you would appreciate sharing some silence you will find us at the library at 7:30pm on the first Monday of each month (even Bank Holidays!!).

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me by email:

[bananpemba@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bananpemba@yahoo.co.uk)

If you'd like to read a bit more about contemplative practice  
you may be interested in my blog:  
[wordsandmusingsruthm.blogspot.com](http://wordsandmusingsruthm.blogspot.com)

*Ruth Mwenga*



**Cross Fire**

Crossfire is our Sunday morning  
group for those aged 10 years  
and above.

Due to growing numbers,  
Crossfire will be moving its  
meeting place from 8th  
September.

Our fortnightly meetings will  
now be held at the Village Hall.

## What a lot of rubbish!

It's been a while since our litter picking challenge back in May and a few of us have noticed how much litter there is around the village now!

So we are going to form a Churches Together in Groby Litter Picking Group to help to keep the village tidy.

Hinckley and Bosworth Council are happy to let us have the necessary equipment on long term loan, and we plan to each go out at least 8 times during the year. However this will be at times that suit each person or couple. We won't try to go out as a group as organising dates/times would be difficult.

We will keep in touch via a WhatsApp group to encourage each other and also share any litter hot spots that need attention.

So far we have 8 in the group, please let us know if you would like to be involved - the more the tidier! It will also be an opportunity for us to meet people in the village and have conversations as we Womble along!

Mary and Trevor





# Grobby Sings



**Celebrating our  
21st Season**

**featuring songs that  
we grew up with**

**Rehearsals at Groby Club from 4th September**

**Wednesday afternoon choir: 1.30pm - 3pm**  
Creche area available

**Children's choir 3.40pm - 4.40pm**  
for children aged 7 years old and over

**Wednesday evening choir: 7.30pm - 9.00pm**

**Performances take place  
Saturday 23rd & Sunday 24th November**

*www.grobysings.org for more information    Registered Charity no. 1180490*



# Groby Sings

Over 100 singers and a large audience really enjoyed our '**European Tour**' concerts at The English Martyrs School at the end of June in which we performed a variety of songs with a European connection. The programme featured items from several European countries including a very timely number representing France and the 2024 Olympics, *The Bells of Notre Dame*, a rousing version of *Men of Harlech* for Wales, ABBA's *Waterloo* for Sweden and the one which provided the audience with their chance to participate by singing along with gusto to *I'm Gonna Be (500 miles)* originally by Scottish duo, The Proclaimers.

So, after such a successful season and a summer break, the choir is now looking forward to singing together again at our usual venue, The Groby Club, from Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> September and it will be a very special milestone for Groby Sings as we celebrate our **21<sup>st</sup> season** entitled **Groby Sings Comes of Age**. This season will be featuring a variety of '*songs that we grew up with!*' We're all intrigued to find out which songs Simon, our conductor, and the musical team have selected as, judging by the age range of the singers, which is from 7 to 97 (potentially!), there will be a wealth of songs to consider. Hopefully, everyone will find a particular favourite included.

As always, we'd love to invite everyone who enjoys singing and socialising to our Wednesday sessions. If you're not sure if it's for you, just come along and try us out. No auditions and no

fees although, as Groby Sings is a registered charity, we ask for a small donation each session from those who can afford it. We are a dementia-friendly choir and would like to encourage singers experiencing dementia or memory problems to come along together with their friends and carers. We know that music is such a great therapy for us all. Our choir is lucky to have a lovely Youth and Children's choir and we'd love to attract more young people so do spread the word that we have a special after-school session for children aged 7 and over.

Sessions are: **Adult singers:** 1.30-3.00pm or 7.30-9.00pm, **Youth & Children's Choir** (7 years and over): 3.40-4.40pm. Pre-school children are welcome in the afternoon in the care of their adult with a crèche area available.

We look forward to seeing singers, old and new, on 4<sup>th</sup> September. Do come and join us!

Enquiries via our [website www.grobysings.org](http://www.grobysings.org) and [check out our Facebook page too.](#)

Groby Sings is a Registered Charity no. 1180490

# NEWS FROM THE WEST LEICESTERSHIRE CHURCHES

The calendar tells us that it is now high summer, even if the weather does not appear so sure! Yet it was warm and sunny on the June Saturday afternoon when we gathered from all five Churches at Christ Church and concluded with worship in their garden.

So, what are the Churches up to this summer?

**Braunstone** is planning a 'Café Church' for their July afternoon service, in response to the wide age range of its regular congregation, nearly all of whom have regular roles in its services. We extend our condolences to its Secretary, Sheena Davis, on the death of her father in May.

Following up its successful monthly Messy Church, **Christ Church** will be holding a children's Holiday Club on the mornings of 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> August. The Church recently rejoiced with regular attendees John and Tammy Hearn at the blessing of their marriage.

**Enderby** has a series of money-raising events on the last Saturdays of each summer month, with a Craft Fair on 27<sup>th</sup> July and then an antique and collectors' fair on 31<sup>st</sup> August. Meanwhile Enderby is starting the process of becoming recognised as a Child & Youth Friendly Church.

**Groby** will be inviting those on 'the fringe' of the Church, or who attend the Saturday 'Tasters' café, to worship and lunch on August 25<sup>th</sup> and to a barbeque after an 'all together' service on September 15<sup>th</sup>. Those will be followed by another ecumenical *Alpha* course in the autumn.



I should particularly seek your prayers for our friends at **St Stephen's**. It is becoming almost impossible to meet the financial demands of keeping up its dearly loved Victorian building from a slowly dwindling congregation. It has therefore been decided that the time has come seriously to consider the long-term future for St Stephen's URC and an Elders' Meeting with the Synod Moderator is scheduled for late August. I should emphasise that nothing has been decided yet, but even this initial exploration feels a sad step.

Nevertheless, St Stephen's will definitely be hosting our next Resource Area event, as we mark the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the great Congregational hymn writer, Isaac Watts, with a 'Songs of Praise' at 6.30 pm on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October. Doubtless we shall sing his greatest hymns, like 'Our God, our help in ages past' and 'When I survey the wondrous cross'. Please join us; we are opening this event up to other local Churches too.

Looking further ahead, we shall repeat our successful 'Christmas Capers' from last year, on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December at 4.00 pm (venue to be advised), so please add the date to your diary and consider what you might contribute to the afternoon!

So, while we recognise some sadness and frustration within local Church life, there is clearly very much for which to thank our God, both in the past and in the future with Him.

Your friend and minister,

Rev Paul Ellis.

(update received mid July)



## Pause for Thought...



Having come literally a split-second from a third Olympic gold, Adam Peaty concluded his interview with the @bbcspport by sharing the relevance of his faith very naturally once again:

“I’m not crying because I came second... These are happy tears,” he explained, smiling through reddened eyes. “I’m not going to define my whole career by a medal... I asked God to show my heart, and this is my heart. I couldn’t have done more.”

Pete Greig. Facebook post. July 2024

### **FOODBANK**

The family that received our help via the foodbank have now been re-housed in Measham and therefore our weekly grocery deliveries have come to an end.

Thank you to everyone who has helped to support this family for the last 2 years by placing items in the box or by giving cash with which to buy food.

**"Thank you, I appreciate everything you have all done for me and my family at the church. We will forever be grateful X"**



## DIARY DATES



**Groby URC Church Meeting: Thursday September 12th**  
7.30 pm at Church. Please let Rev. Paul or any of the elders know if there are items you would like to have included on the agenda.

**Fairtrade Fortnight:** September 9th to 22nd September.  
30th Anniversary celebrations at Saturday Tasters and Sunday church over weekend of 15th & 16th.

**BBQ: Sunday September 15th:** Following the Altogether Service, a BBQ for the families of y.church, Crossfire, Tasters and Under the Willow Tree."

**Alpha Course Starts: Thursday September 19th**

**Prayers for Ukraine: Thursdays 5th and 19th** at 6.30 pm in church

**Rock Solid:** Now every Friday during term-time - 7.30 - 9 pm at our church. For Year 5 - 11 children.

### Advance Notice



Songs of Praise at St Stephen's Church  
Sunday October 5th at 6.30 pm

## October 2024 issue

The deadline for October's issue of Contact is **SAT 21st Sept** but happy to accept articles sooner if prepared and ready to go!

Please submit to [magazine@grobyurc.com](mailto:magazine@grobyurc.com) or to Kathy (5 Hawthorn Rise, Groby) Preferred via email.

Groby United Reformed Church  
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janesnips@hotmail.com

### SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP

Our Sunday morning services start at 10 am and are recorded then broadcast afterwards on our Church Facebook page. Groby United Reformed Church / Facebook. Our worship includes monthly Holy Communion

**The church building** has a loop hearing system, wheelchair access, a toilet for the disabled & baby nappy changing facilities.

### WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Mon: Noah's Ark parent & toddler group - 9.30-11.30 (term time)

Thurs: 'Fair Cuppa'\* at Groby village Hall-10.30-12 am

Fri: CatCH\* parent & toddler group-9.30 - 11 am (term time)

Fri. (Fridays during term time) 7.30 pm Rock Solid. Games and Grub for children in Years 5 - 11.

Sat:Tasters\* Coffee, hot cobs. Kids activities -10-12am

There are also regular Homegroups running throughout the week. Our Secretarial Contact has more information.