

# CONTACT

The monthly magazine of

Groby

United Reformed Church



February 2025

# Happy Birthday

*Megan Edwards celebrates her birthday in February*



*Happy Birthday to You*

*May the Good Lord Bless You*

Sue Lawrence-Brook

*Pause for Thought...*



**“A Candle loses nothing by lighting another candle”.**

**James Keller**

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

**Our Facebook page** is at <https://www.facebook.com/grobyurc>

**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.**

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## WELCOME FROM PHIL, CHURCH ELDER



Last night, as I write was one of the coldest for some time. As I walked through a frozen Spinney and looked at white over allotments there was no sign of new life, but we can be expectant that come the warmer weather we will gradually see those new signs of life and growth. I also pray this for our church as we move along a New Year.

In this issue of Contact we reflect on some events over Christmas following the last double issue. It is always useful to evaluate where we have come from as well as where we are going.

In our preaching plan we will be focusing on 'Holy Habits' over the coming months. More details will be given by Paul, but essentially Holy Habits is an adventure in Christian discipleship based upon Luke's picture of the early church in Acts 2:42-47. It explores and encourages the practice of ten disciplines, or holy habits, that Luke presents in the passage.

In our youth and children's work 'Lighthouse' after school club is starting and Louise is going into Brookvale to start 'Connect@ Brookvale' an exciting new initiative and the first real contact with Brookvale for some time. This is in addition to all the other work that is continuing.

At Church AGM we have opportunity to 'affirm' all the areas of service people of our church regularly undertake. We give thanks for all those who give freely of their time and talents in so many areas of church life. All the groups that run and all areas of responsibility require willing people to come forward. If you are not currently involved in rotas or assisting in a group

please do speak to Paul or an elder as there are always more help required.

In 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12 we are reminded: 'Though we are many, we are one body in union with Christ, and we are all joined to each other as different parts of one body. So we are to use our different gifts in accordance with the grace that God has given us'.

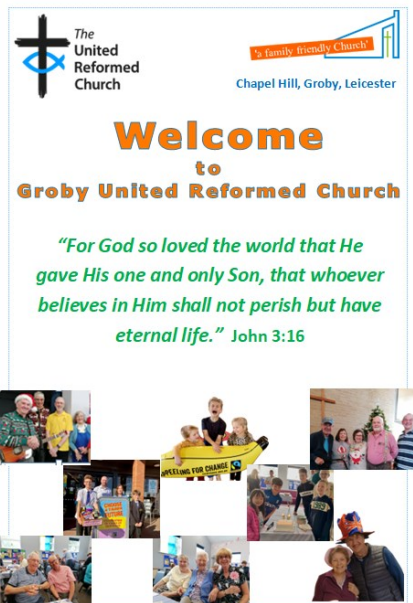
So, I do pray and urge you that we may move together as one body, but with different parts and with different gifts to promote new signs of life and growth within our church.

Phil

## New Updated 'Welcome Booklet'

If you're a visitor, or have been coming to our church for a while, and would like to know a little more about us, then do pick up this 8 page little booklet. It won't give you all the answers, but perhaps enough to want to know more, and how to find out

It might be that you know someone who is asking - this booklet might help. Feel free to take one from the table in the church entrance hall.





## TEACHING AND READINGS FOR FEBRUARY 2025

Feb. 2nd	<b>Prelude to Holy Habits. Micah 6: 6-8</b>	Rev. Riffat
Feb. 9th	<b>Introduction to Holy Habits. Acts 2: 42-47</b>	Paul
Feb 16th	<b>Intergenerational worship</b>	Richard & Louise
Feb 23rd	<b>Holy Habits 1. Biblical teaching. Colossians 3: 12-17</b>	Paul

**This service will include sharing Holy Communion.**

## HOLY HABITS

You may have heard, or read, that, from this New Year, this Church will be embarking on a series of ten 'Holy Habits'. These will not only be the basis of our preaching, but our Home Groups are also invited to take up the theme for the next few months. So, what exactly are *Holy Habits*?

*Holy Habits* is an adventure in Christian discipleship. It explores Luke's model of Church found in Acts chapter 2 verses 42 to 47, identifies ten habits and encourages the development of a way of life formed by them.

The Habits are:

1. Biblical teaching
2. Fellowship
3. Breaking of bread
4. Prayer
5. Giving
6. Service
7. Eating together
8. Gladness and generosity
9. Worship
10. Making More Disciples.

*Holy Habits* takes an approach to discipleship that is whole life, intergenerational and missional. The idea is that each habit become embedded in the life of this Church.

Because many of our Home Groups only meet fortnightly, and because I am only with you for half of the Sundays, we shall not consider more than two Habits per month – and also take a break from it around Easter.

Two resources may be of particular help to Home Groups and their leaders. I recommend purchasing the book *Holy habits* by Andrew Roberts (Malcolm Down publishing, 2016). This includes a chapter for each habit, with suggestions for further reflection and action and a Biblical passage to reflect on. Then there is also the Holy Habits website, [holyhabits.org.uk](http://holyhabits.org.uk) .

The call we have heard to Christian discipleship is a call to adventure. Will you join me on that adventure, on Sundays, in Home Groups and, most of all, in living the life of Jesus today?

Paul.

*(February's Helping Hands are on the next page this month)*

## February's Helping Hands

	Elder	Music	Media	Welcome	Coffee
<b>Feb.</b>	(Mary)	(Trevor)	(Barry)	(Joy)	(Joy)
2nd	Wendy	Helen	Dave	Linda & Hilary	Margaret & Maurice
9th	Margaret	Sue	Chris	Ruth & Roger	Joy & Cheryl
16th	Sue	David	Barry	Sue & Mike	Hilary & Dave
23rd	Mary	David & Trevor	Mark	Joy & Peter	Mary & Trevor



**Sunday Flowers**  
(Barbara Conlon)

Feb 2nd : Mark & Rachel  
 Feb 9th : Mark & Rachel  
 Feb 16th : Joy & Peter  
 Feb 23rd: Linda & Tim



**"The Clean Team!"**  
(Kathy Du Boulay)

Week Beginning  
 Feb 3rd: Our Chores  
 Feb 10th: Linda & Tim  
 Feb 16th: Our Chores  
 Feb 23rd: Sue LB & Sue A

Our Chores, the cleaning company we use, tend to clean on a Tuesday morning ideally, occasionally Monday pm or Fridays, depending what else is happening. Please let Kathy know of any problems with these times. Thank you.





## The 2024 Christmas Appeal

Salma Ravat from One Roof Leicester wrote

“I would like to thank you, the Voice for Justice members and of course the congregation of Groby URC for your generosity.

The £2,470 donated by the congregation to provide much needed accommodation and support to single people who are homeless in the City (Leicester).

In 2024 ORL:

Accommodated 68 individuals

Provided 15,000 nights accommodation.

Acquired a new home.

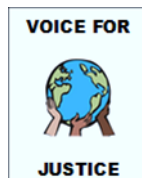
Supported 18 forever-homes.

Provided 750 volunteer hours.”

Thank you again, and all we look forward to in the future.  
All the best for the New Year!

And a big thank you from the Voice for Justice team to everyone who has enabled our church to give such a pleasing amount to this very worthy cause.

People have been incredibly generous again and we appreciate the response.



Our thanks as well, to Phil, who was able to deal with the Gift Aid for those who already have this in place.

### Late News....



**Congratulations Salma CEO has been awarded the MBE in the Kings New Years Honours list for her work supporting and helping people who are homeless.**



(An Amazing)

## ‘Journey To Bethlehem’

A team of 15 from Churches together in Groby have taken approximately 250 children from years 3 and 4 from the 4 Primary Schools on their Journey to Bethlehem once again. We began with 2 days at the URC and then had a final day at Ratby Church and what joy those children gave us!

Led by 3 Angels, they met a Wise Man who had lost, amongst other things, his frankincense (dog biscuits? Bones? Sweets?), a Traveller who had lost several items that included her special seal (is it like a credit card?), and a Shepherd who had a torch that he lit from the fire (Harry Potter's broomstick?).

They encountered a very fierce Roman Soldier (Are you a Gladiator?) who demanded money from everyone and was very tall! I was very worried that he was going to arrest me at one point. Bethlehem Post headline swam before my eyes "Gabriel Arrested. Steals Royal Robe".

It is wonderful to see the children get so immersed and involved in this journey as they scream at the Wise Man that they know the baby will be born in a stable in Bethlehem and not a Palace in Jerusalem as he thinks because they are from the future. The best bit for me is when they say they know because they have seen it in Open the Book.

The 3 days are exhausting but so rewarding and we get to do it all again in 2 years time. If you want to know more about this amazing journey please chat to one of the team who will be happy to relate lots of anecdotes and fill in the details - artefacts, quiz, story.....on it goes.....

Lynda Hawkes.





## February's Prayer Sheet

"Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!." 2 Corinthians 9:15

Welcome to our February prayer sheet.

This is the first prayer sheet for 2025 and there is much to be thankful for, with lots of exciting initiatives going on within our church this year. But there is also much to pray for.

This month we're focusing on outreach activities including; Under the Willow Tree, Ladies Afternoon Tea and Lighthouse. Also looking at the wider world we are praying for the women of Afghanistan who are facing increasing restrictions on freedom and oppression.

### **Prayers for Ladies Afternoon Tea**

On 9<sup>th</sup> February we are holding our second Ladies Afternoon Tea. This event is a great opportunity for ladies within the church to invite friends and family members who may not come to church along to enjoy an afternoon of friendship and food. There will also be a talk from guest speaker Gary Kinton.

Wendy Hall is coordinating the event and has asked for the following prayers:

- Pray for help in the organisation and preparation of the event.
- Pray for the speaker Gary Kinton, who will be sharing a message about his personal journey from drug addiction and loss to the managing of a Christian rehabilitation centre.
- Prayerfully consider who you could invite to this event.
- Pray for all those who attend, that they will hear the message that God loves them and wants to know them.

## **Prayers for Under the Willow Tree**

As Under the Willow Tree celebrates its first birthday, Wendy sends the following pray requests:

Under the Willow Tree is a year old, as we launched with a Christmas party last year. We are thankful for the many people who have helped and supported the set up of this venture with Jill, Linda and myself. Give thanks for all that they have done. We are also thankful for the grant that we received from the URC to buy resources.

UWT has been a support to five families who come along to our sessions, and we have been walking alongside families who have been through the arduous journey of getting their children into the right school placements for their needs and we give thanks that transitions have been successful. The children are now placed and very happy.

Give thanks that provision for a shed to store resources is slowly progressing, and for Phil Holmes and Dave Smith who are giving their time and energy to this, and for Phil who holds our finance as Church treasurer. We are very grateful for them.

Please pray for:

- Our sessions on 1st & 3rd Sundays of every month, for safety joy and blessing to abound, as we share one another's burdens
- Help on a Sunday morning after church to set up the building. This wouldn't take too long with more people involved.
- Our outreach launch into the Primary Schools happening now. Jill and Wendy have met with the Special Educational Needs Co ordination ( SENCO) at Lady Jane Grey. She was positive about letting families in school know about us

and we are hoping to meet parents for a coffee morning who might benefit from UWT in the New Year. Wendy is also meeting the Senco's from Elizabeth Woodville and Martinshaw.

- Pray that we might reach families who would benefit from our gathering.
- Pray for funding as we progress the shed. We know we have secured some funding from the Thomas Herbert Trust, but don't know what this will be yet, and we will need to secure more funding in the new year, to cover all the costs. Thank Jill for her ongoing and continual work in finding funding.
- Finally, pray that we develop our vision. Blessing is central to all that we do. Pray that more families will join us, and that the Kingdom of God might be found in the flourishing, care, acceptance, and love, found in this gathering.



## Prayers for Lighthouse

Our new children's after school club, Lighthouse, started on 17<sup>th</sup> January.

The group is an opportunity for primary school age children to come together for fun and games and also to learn a bit more about the message of Jesus.

This an opportunity to reach this age group who may not be involved in any other activities in church and start to get to know them before they can join Rock Solid. It is also an opportunity for the older children who are already in Rock Solid to come along and help.



Even though we included prayers for the launch of Lighthouse in our December prayer sheet, it's important that we continue to pray for this important piece of outreach:

- Thank God for all those who have volunteered their time to make Lighthouse possible.
- Pray for enough adults to support the group and also for the young people from Rock Solid who will be helping.
- Pray for the children who will come along to Lighthouse, that they will find it a place where they can have a good time, make friends and also hear about God and his love for them.
- Pray for the families who are connected to the church through Lighthouse and Rock Solid, that through their children coming along to these activities they will also have the chance to hear about God.

## Prayers for the Women of Afghanistan

This month we received a request for prayers for the women and girls of Afghanistan. As the Taliban continue to rule the country the situation for women across the county is getting more desperate. In spite of their initial promises to respect women's rights within the framework of Sharia law, the Taliban have issued numerous decrees that prevent women and girls from exercising their basic rights to freedom of expression, liberty, work and education.

In situations like this it can be hard to know what we can do to help, but we must continue to pray for all those affected by the increased restrictions on freedom:

- Ask God to change the attitudes that the de facto leaders of Afghanistan have towards women in the country. Pray for the harsh new laws to be repealed and for the rights of women to be valued and respected.
- Pray that the new laws will not be enforced harshly and for God to protect women from violence.
- Pray that women across Afghanistan will believe in their God-given worth and in the contribution they can make to society.
- Pray for peace and protection for the Afghan people facing great uncertainty and the threat of serious human rights abuses.



## Our Christmas Day Service this year

was led by our church Elders.

Using 'giving / presents' as something of a theme, several Christmas boxes were opened to reveal a message and prayer. The various items in the boxes reminded us that God chose to come to earth as a helpless baby to be our Saviour, that he chooses ordinary folk to serve Him (you and me), and that he came for all people whatever their circumstance and wealth. The gifts the Wise men bought along prophetically tell of the saving work of Jesus as King, who brings people to God by dying for our sins.



Finally, we had a 'reverse offertory' using yummy chocolate coins that we get to keep / eat! The point was a challenge as to what we will do with God's gift of a Saviour. Put it away and save it? Decide, its not for me? Or accept it by accepting Jesus into our hearts.



*Thank you to all involved. Kathy*



# Pinkies up Ladies for



## Afternoon Tea & Talk



Sunday 9th February

3 - 5 pm at Groby URC

Speaker: Gary Kinton

We will be holding a ladies afternoon tea on Sunday 9th February as an outreach event. The speaker will be Gary Kinton who spoke at the men's breakfast. His is a tale of abject drug addiction and loss, to running a successful Christian drug rehabilitation centre and a new life. He explains what knowing Jesus did for him.

Please let Wendy Hall know if you can help to organise and deliver this event which was highly appreciated last year by those who came. Meanwhile please begin to consider who you could invite.

## News from the West Leicestershire Churches

It has been a joy to share Christmas celebrations with all five Churches and to let our hair down a bit at 'Christmas Capers'.

**St Stephen's** is now looking positively at the year ahead. A Steering Group has already met to start planning activities and events for the near future, as we aim to look forward and, within our capabilities of manpower, to be more active. No doubt you will hear more in the near future. Meanwhile, we have welcomed a few new worshipers recently.

**Braunstone** continues its close links with the Nursery, 'United Play', which uses the premises. Rob and I were involved in their Nativity Play and invited to their Christmas dinner. There is something special about a Nursery that includes a nativity scene within its Santa's grotto and the children are photographed by the manger rather than on Santa's knee!

**Christ Church** enjoyed another busy Advent and Christmas, from the more formal candlelit carol service, with over 40 in the congregation, to the informal Messy Church and 'Carols and mince pies' evening (from which 'Christmas Capers' was copied). Christ Church also hosts carols and food for the local Community Association, which attracted around 80 people.

**Enderby**, arising from its Child & Youth Friendly Church work, offered two new initiatives in Advent. The smaller congregation – in both senses! – was for an Under-fives' Carol Service based on the weekly *Ark* Toddler Group. Much bigger was a Christingle service for the Guides, Brownies and Rainbows, which proved noisy but successful (and safe!)

**Groby** repeated its popular Christmas Eve intergenerational service and the Elders led the worship on Christmas morning. The church was nearly full on both the Sundays before Christmas. In early December, children from all three local primary schools had been there for a 'Journey to Bethlehem', discovering the Christmas story through characters involved in it. I played a scary Roman soldier!

I am excited that East Midlands Synod is this spring embarking on '**Talking Faith**', a project copied from Mersey Synod that encourages all of us in the Churches to talk about our faith with people we know. Training will be offered to make this less scary than most of us would otherwise find it!

So in West Leicestershire we are responding to this promptly with our next joint event, on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> April at Christ Church. The Synod Training Officer and Mission Officer have agreed to offer us a three-hour session that day and I hope that many from all five Churches will be able to attend. It would be easy to say that we need to attract more people to our Churches in order for them to survive, and that is true. It is more important though that we tell people about Jesus for their own sakes than for ours.

Let us be fired up and enabled to talk our faith!

Your friend and minister,

Paul.





## Bethlehemian Rhapsody

Who'd have thought we'd finish our Christmas Capers Evening with puppets, starting in Bethlehemian Rhapsody, telling the Nativity Story.

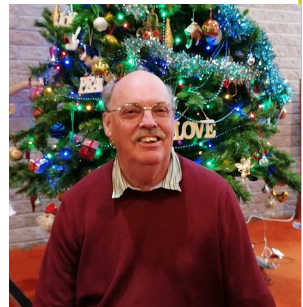
It completed a great time for all – after star turns featuring further renditions of 'The 12 Days of Christmas', a Spoonerism version of 'Cinderella', a wonderful telling of the Joyce Grenfell monologue 'The Nativity Play'.

Included in the highlights were a cast of 'thousands'? (well quite a few of the Enderby/ Braunstone contingent) telling the Red Riding Hood story, and a singing solo from our very own minister!

To get us warmed up, Trevor Pringle led us in singing some Christmas Classics. With a break where we could sup a hot drink and munch on Christmas favourites, not to mention a chance to chat to our friends from the area churches – we all enjoyed what might become a Christmas Tradition!

Thanks to all who were up for the challenge, and those that made it possible!

*Alan Bloor preparing his spoonerism!!*





## Trevor's Busking Days Finish - but more music yet to come!

As many of you will know I have been out busking to raise funds for Trussell Trust food banks

since August 2021. It's been great fun but hard work too - sometimes in the baking sun or freezing cold! Mary has been with me each time helping me stay organised, chatting to people and honing her roadie skills!

As a result of donations made last month our total raised stands at £15,756. A huge thank you to everyone who has supported us over the course of our entire busking journey particularly our friends at Church and Tasters. Whilst it has been very enjoyable it is now time for a change and I can now confirm that my busking as Troubadour T has officially come to an end! Going forward I will still be doing some music related fundraising - just not on the streets! Look out for details later in the year.

Trevor



Hi Everyone

Deb Goodhead here - I just wanted to send an Open Invitation to anyone in Groby who knows me :) (I used to go to Groby URC from the age of 7 and then I was the Youth and Children's Worker 2004-2012! ) I would love you to join me for a Birthday - Reunion - Fundraiser! Hope to see you there!

A hand-drawn invitation on a yellow background. At the top, a light blue box contains the text: "Saturday 15th March 2025 2.30pm - 5.00pm". Below this, it says "Drinks - Snacks + Cake - Games" with colorful balloons. The location is "Grobby United Reformed Church, Chapel Hill, Groby Leicester. LE6 OFE". A note says "Please feel free to drop in for as long or as short as you can. Partners + Children welcome". The main title is "Deb's Birthday Reunion + Fundraiser" written in blue cursive. There is a handwritten message: "Please come & celebrate my birthday with me & enjoy catching up!". Below that, it says "There'll also be an opportunity to support the Youth Team Mission Trip I am leading to Tanzania Summer 2025!". On the right, there is a small graphic for "OVERSEAS MISSION TANZANIA 2025" and an RSVP section: "RSVP to Deb by text or WhatsApp 07954 472988".



After last season, entitled *Groby Sings Comes of Age*, which ended in a very successful concert week-end before Christmas, Groby Sings has had a break ready to resume on **Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> February** when we'll be back singing together to the theme of *Groby Sings in its Element* featuring 'songs with beautiful chemistry'. Intriguing! Join us for laughter, cake and a bit of singing too. 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





## DIARY DATES



**Church AGM and Elder's Elections:** Thursday 30th  
January 7.30 pm, at Church.

**Prayers for Peace (including prayers for Ukraine):**  
Wednesday 5th and 19th February - 6.30 pm in church

**Ladies Afternoon Tea & Talk:** February 9th, 3 - 5 pm at  
Church

### March 2025 issue

The next issue of Contact will be for March

The deadline for this will be **Saturday 15th February.**

**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.

### Print or Hard Copy of Contact?

Contact magazine is published in print and on the church website, [grobyurc.com](http://grobyurc.com). If you would like to be added or removed from the monthly hyperlink email list, please let Kathy know at the magazine email address [magazine@grobyurc.com](mailto:magazine@grobyurc.com)

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

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### 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.