

## **NOTTINGHAM AND DERBY METHODIST DISTRICT –**

**PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT VISIT**

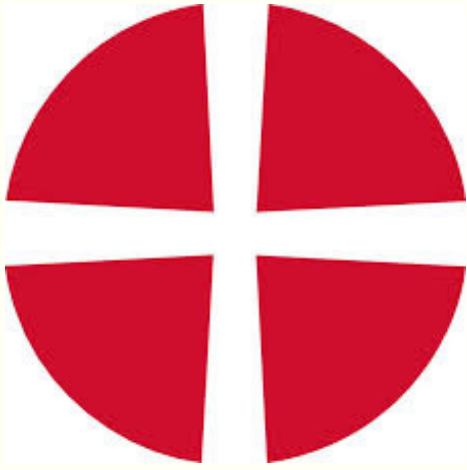
# **GOOD NEWS STORIES**

**From the circuits**



**Nottingham and Derby  
Methodist District**

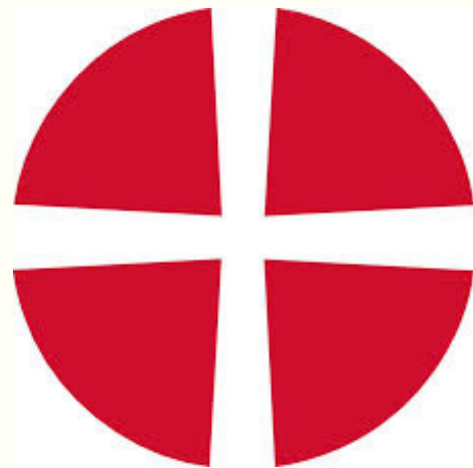
**2025**



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# 1. Welcome Nottingham and Derby District



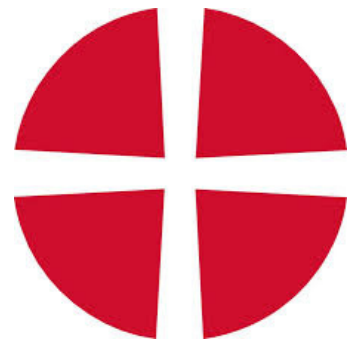
*John Wesley famously said, 'The world is my parish.' I am intrigued by what happens when we emphasise the word, 'world.' If we do, then we get a sense of what it means to be the church of God living our who we are called to be – not simply in fellowship and worship, but deeply through mission and ministry in the communities we are called to serve.*

*The Nottingham & Derby District seeks to offer loving and life affirming hope to all through the Good News of Jesus Christ.*

*This booklet seeks to offer some examples of the rich and varied ways in which Methodist people across the district, often on partnership with others, are living out our desire to love God, love others and make disciples.*

*From worship enriched by diversity to engagement with those seeking justice and care in our communities, the District is seeking to live out our calling to love God and put our faith into practice through loving others and thus making disciples.*

*Andy Fyall  
Chair of the District*



## 2. Ashbourne

Superintendent - Nicola Briggs

### Transforming Ashbourne Methodist Church



Work has started on the multi-million pound transformation of Ashbourne Methodist Church. The building will be completely redeveloped, creating wonderful spaces for worship & events, as well as visitor accommodation and a cafe

.Worship has moved into a local school and the parish church hall, both of whom have made us very welcome.

### Christmas Story

We have shared the Christmas story with around 250 children from 9 schools. The

Open the Book team have been an important part of this. This year, the team has expanded and now visits 6 schools every month.





## 2. Ashbourne (continued)

### Welly Club

Welly Club is Ashbourne's group for babies & toddlers. It meets every week and recently enjoyed a Christmas service which was attended by over 60 people, including a local pre-school.

Body



### Muddy Church

Muddy Church is a monthly outdoor session for primary-aged children, with crafts, games and Bible stories in God's wonderful creation.

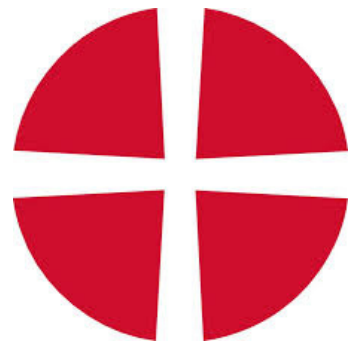
### Hospitality / Fish and Chip church

- As a Circuit, we offer hospitality at the Ashbourne Show, providing a chance to sit down, have a drink and relax at what can be a very busy and tiring show.
- **Fish & Chips Church** is a great way of sharing worship in a relaxed setting. Our Christmas service featured some great carols and a huge pile of chips!



# 3. Derby

Superintendent - Tracey Harris



## **'A Journey of Faith and Compassion: Our Chinese Church Visit to Kenya'**

From August 21st to August 30th, 2024, Rev Calvin Cheung with 4 members of our Chinese church embarked on a heartfelt and transformative mission trip to Kenya. This journey was not just a physical travel across borders, but a spiritual experience filled with love, faith, and meaningful encounters. Through months of preparation, prayers, and fundraising, our church family came together to make this mission possible, raising a total of GBP1,100.

This journey strengthened our faith and deepened our understanding of God's work among the nations, as we witnessed the challenges faced by the less fortunate and shared in the stories of hope, faith, and transformation.





### 3. Derby Circuit (continued)

#### **“ Journey of Faith and Compassion: Our Chinese Church Visit to Kenya’**

##### **Visiting the Slum Area and Serving the Poor Children**

One of the most impactful parts of our visit was to a local slum area, where poverty and hardship are daily realities. We were deeply moved as we saw families living in extremely challenging conditions, struggling to meet even their basic needs. In this environment, we were privileged to minister to poor children who welcomed us with bright smiles and open hearts despite their circumstances.

We spent time with them, sharing stories, songs, and prayers. Through simple acts of love and kindness, we brought food supplies and small gifts, hoping to bring a ray of hope into their lives. Their joy and resilience reminded us of the importance of faith, even in times of adversity, and their pure hearts touched us deeply.



##### **Fellowship with the Chinese Church in Kenya**

During our stay, we also visited a local Chinese church in Kenya. It was a wonderful and uplifting experience to meet fellow believers who share our culture and language, yet are part of God’s work in a different land. The congregation welcomed us warmly, and we had the opportunity to worship together, sing praises, and hear inspiring testimonies of faith.

We listened to powerful stories from our friends in the church about their struggles, perseverance, and trust in God’s providence. These moments of fellowship reminded us that we are all part of the same body of Christ, no matter where we are in the world.

### 3. Derby Circuit (continued)

#### **“ Journey of Faith and Compassion: Our Chinese Church Visit to Kenya’**

##### **A Remarkable Story: John’s Journey of Faith**

One of the most inspiring highlights of our visit was meeting John, a former Muslim who found Christ and experienced a life-changing conversion. John’s story is a testament to the power of God’s grace. His journey was not without challenges, as he faced rejection from his community and endured many personal sacrifices. Yet, through his unwavering faith, John has embraced the calling to serve the Lord. During our time with John, we accompanied him to a local theology school, where he began his studies to become a minister. Seeing his dedication and passion for God’s Word was humbling and encouraging for all of us. John’s story is a powerful reminder of the transforming power of Christ’s love, which transcends all barriers.

##### **Reflecting on the Journey**

As we returned home, our hearts were full of gratitude and reflection. This journey to Kenya allowed us to experience firsthand the challenges faced by the poor, the beauty of fellowship among believers, and the incredible stories of transformation in Christ. The memories of the children’s smiles, the warmth of the Chinese church community, and John’s unwavering faith will remain with us forever.

We pray that God continues to bless the people we met, especially those living in poverty and our brother John as he pursues his ministry. May our experience inspire us to be more compassionate, faithful, and committed to sharing God’s love wherever He calls us.



**“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in.” – Matthew 25:35**



### 3. Derby Circuit (continued)

#### Susanna Wesley House

Susanna Wesley House continues to be a safe, welcoming place for those seeking refuge in the UK. In the last month we have served over 100 meals at our world kitchen lunches, most of which are cooked by asylum seekers and refugees and eaten round tables together where we pray, and tears and laughter are shared in equal measure.

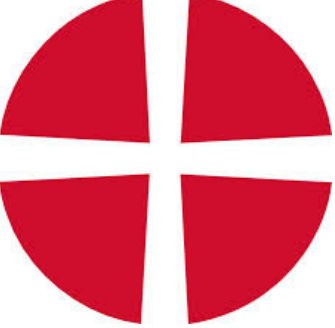


At one meal we can have in excess of ten different languages spoken. Our community is a diverse one with local residents mixing easily with asylum seekers living in local hotels.

This week we had our 'Carols on the Square' event with a scratch nativity in which refugees acted in a portrayal of the birth of our saviour, Jesus Christ, who was himself a refugee and relied on the kindness of strangers.







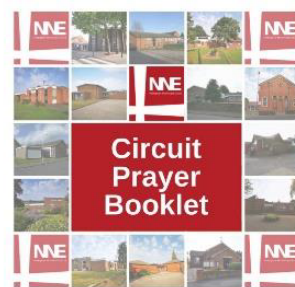
## 4. Nottingham North East

Superintendent - Richard Byass

The Nottingham North East Circuit is all about equipping our 14 congregations to seek, serve and follow Jesus, so that God's love is shared in our communities and lives are transformed.

In 2024 the circuit has equipped churches by ...

- Holding two circuit sharing days in 2024, helping churches to think about who they are as churches and where and how they can show God's love in their local setting. As a result, every church now has a vision statement
- Asking churches for their prayer requests. Each week on our current plan, we are asked to pray for a specific church. We have produced a circuit prayer booklet which contains all the prayer requests
- Holding in person Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Training, with another planned for 2025
  - Providing Lent and Advent Booklets of Reflections, written by the circuit staff (we have been doing this for over 3 years now). These have been used by individuals and by house groups and have been sent all over the country and the world, helping those who use them on their discipleship journey!
  - Having themed preaching across the circuit in the summer looking at 6 of the discipleship pathways, following on from a similar preaching series in 2024



A guide for how we can pray for each other as a circuit, churches and congregations, including information and prayer requests from across the Nottingham North East Circuit.



## 4. Nottingham North East ( continued)

- Delivering a service thinking about resourcing worship to every church in the circuit. As a result, we have been able to give a note to preach, have had several existing worship leaders asking for some refresher training and had some new people interested in becoming worship leaders. We are also looking at setting up a Readers Ministry to allow people to share pre-prepared services. We are currently planning a training session in January
- Delivering at least three face to face Safeguarding Sessions a year
- Meeting regularly with our church treasurers, church safeguarding officers, GDPR leads and our supernumeraries. This has proved unbelievably valuable and so we are looking to extend this to church property stewards in 2025
- Having a skilled, hardworking, friendly Circuit Leadership team who support each other and the local churches
- Working hard at improving communication and getting to know each other and we believe that this has helped the Nottingham North East Circuit to become a settled, functional circuit in the 4 years we have existed
- Helping local churches in the recruitment of lay staff, families' workers and Youth Missioner
- Developing and streamlining our archiving process co-ordinated by Julie Compton who is now also the District Archivist and is part of the connexional archiving group. One of her team will be on the cover of the new archiving handbook!

**We believe that this support is allowing local churches to share God's love in their community**

## 4. Nottingham North East ( continued)

- The **City Centre Pioneer Project** (with help from knitters and crocheters across the circuit) left over 300 Christmas Angels in the City Centre for people to pick up as a Christmas Gift
- **Nuthall** held a successful Christmas Tree festival where local schools were invited to visit



- **God's Pantry** takes place weekly at Arnold where families in need can receive a subsidised food parcel and they held a wonderful Christingle Service
  - **Phoenix Farm** have a weekly Mental Health Café and recently served a Big Christmas dinner to over 70 people raising £700.
- **Sherwood** are singing Carols in the community with other churches in the area
- **St John's** invited the local school into the building
- **Calverton** hosted a Harvest festival for their local school
- **Hucknall Central** have started a new Tiny Toes group for 0 – 3 year olds.
- **Hucknall East** Side continue to have a weekly community lunch
- **Awsworth's Amigo Group** offers friendship to the people of the village
- **Ravensworth Road** continue to cook a monthly Sunday Lunch for church members and local people and foster relationships with those groups who use their building.
- **Gedling Road** welcome Guides and Brownies and the Carers Federation to use their building

## 4. Nottingham North East (continued)

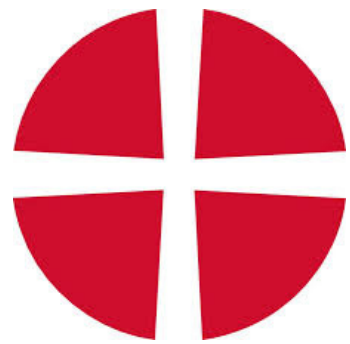
Worshipping on a Tuesday Afternoon means that Aspley can share worship with some members from the local Anglican Church



**Bestwood Park** hold a weekly community lunch for about 30 guests. This is cooked and served by the members of Pulp Friction, a charity working with adults with learning disabilities who are based at Bestwood Park church. You may have seen their award winning Garden at the Chelsea Flower Show!

**Rise Park** continue to build links with the children, parents and staff of the pre-school based in their building

## 5. East Staffordshire and South Derbyshire



Superintendent - Rachel Wood

"Like many circuits, from the outside, it can look like a failure, with reducing numbers, less people to do important roles, financial issues and church closures. However there are signs of hope and things to give thanks for. The circuit contribute to the work of a schools worker in Uttoxeter, he works in many schools across Uttoxeter and beyond. One of the things he does is help schools set up worship teams to help enable worship in their schools. For the second year in a row, those worship teams have been invited by the churches of Uttoxeter to "**The Big Give**" an event where the children spent time doing activities and challenges to help them find the real meaning of Christmas. They are then asked to find ways of sharing that meaning, with the schools they come from, before the entire school receives a selection box as a gift from the churches.

Schools work has developed in many places across the circuit including assemblies, open the book, education Sunday services at Hilton, where schools take an active part in the service. Rachel Moss has continued to develop ministry with the Guiding groups of Swadlincote culminating in a Christmas carol service for over a 100 girls. Short Street Methodist Church were struggling, in terms of numbers and trustees, took the challenge of looking at their mission and ministry, and has worked hard engaging with the parent and toddler group and the community, their membership and congregation are growing now only in numbers but also in their faith journey.





## 5. East Staffordshire and South Derbyshire (continued)

Recently Andrew and Rachel Wood, helped the church celebrate Christmas by using puppets.

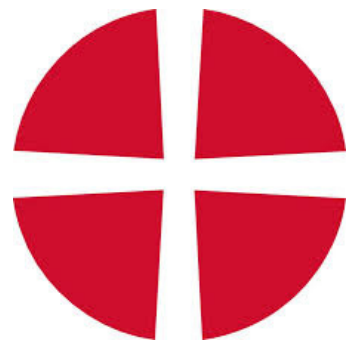


Over the last few months, we have tried new things, including an open space in an empty church building (which is used as our base for online services and meetings) as well as a craft day and film night.

We continue to explore how that building can be used for mission and ministry, and we continue to encourage people to engage with the Methodist Way of Life, by offering ideas and events, such as daily advent reflections based on Christmas Carols, bible studies across the circuit and a circuit quiet day in the new year."

## 6. Nottingham South

Superintendent - Mark Roberts



### Children and families work at Keyworth

Exciting things are going on in Keyworth, where Rebecca the Children and families worker has been in post for nearly 2 years. This is an ecumenical post financed largely by Methodist but with contributions financial from other Churches in the village under Churches Together in Keyworth. All the Churches support the work in planning and in producing lots of volunteers to help.



Here is Rebecca in action at a recent Christingle service:

As well as Toddler Praise and Wednesday Toddlers there is work in school through Open the Book, and after school clubs, posada activities, crib services. Through the year are a number of village events which we are encouraged to join, as well as Good Friday workshop, light parties and Time Travelling and All age worship.

## 6. Nottingham South (continued)

### The Coat of Hopes visits Keyworth

The Coat of Hopes travelled through Keyworth spending the night in Church on its way to Stamford. Many people tried on the Coat and walked with it accompanied by a very moving song. At a meeting in the evening we heard the story of the Coat made up of pieces of blanket into which people have worked their griefs, remembrances, prayers and hopes for the place they call home.

It carries an invitation to share our love and responsibility in facing this climate change and ecological emergency. At coffee morning the next day we walked a little way towards the next destination. Two people joined the walkers later and one person has sent a new patch for the Coat. Here's picture of the coat leaving the church.



- And some more good news in brief: with memory loss take place at West Bridgford and Radcliffe on Trent. These are a real blessing for those who attend, with carers particularly enjoying the support they can find there.
- **Woolly Wednesdays**, for those who enjoy knitting and crochet, has grown significantly at West Bridgford over the past year. It is not just the wool that matters but the conversation that takes place as people work. One of the members of the group has shared on Radio Nottingham, how the group had helped in his recovery after an attempted suicide.



## 6. Nottingham South (continued)

### Inner city location at Bridgeway Hall

Just over a year ago some of the team running the foodbank at Bridgeway (run by a mix of church members and 'people of peace' from our wider community) decided to set up a food pantry.

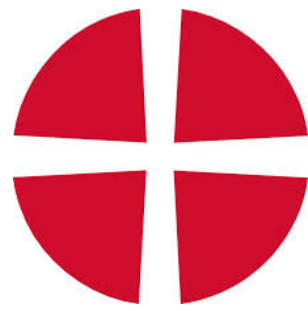
This was to support those who weren't in 'crisis' but who still needed access to subsidised food. We decided to work with the 'Your Local Pantry' charity and within 6 months the pantry had reached its limit of 100 members. This has recently been increased following reallocation of space in the church building. The community cafe alongside the pantry has fostered greater peer support and community cohesion. Conversations have led to folk who are refugees exploring how their skills and qualifications gained in their country of birth might lead to employment in the UK.



'Alongside the pantry on Thursdays a nascent 'Men in Sheds' project is emerging, led by two men who have recently joined our Sunday morning congregation. They first got involved through Sunday Supper and The Gathering - our informal Sunday afternoon service for unchurched folk and community meal. Both lads had been homeless for a while but have now been rehoused.

The project started 6 months ago as the guys wanted to offer their practical skills to carry out basic maintenance tasks around the church - a desire to 'practically give something back', as they put it. The offering of time and skills is a response we frequently see from those who have experienced God's love through the kindness of others but who have meager financial resources. The project is looking to partner with The Green Meadows project as a means of reaching out to other guys (although open to all sexes) experiencing isolation and as a means of sharing the Gospel through word and deed.'

## 7. Grantham and Vale of Belvoir



Superintendent - Tim Morris

### Bingham

In January we will be welcoming into the membership of the Methodist Church, 20 adults who have moved to Bingham from Hong Kong. Many of them now play an active part in the life of the church – hospitality, welcome, PA/AV desk and Junior Church.

100 people are booked for our Messy Christingle afternoon on 20th December. Many are children and families who attend our toddler's group and Messy Church events

Our Lively Spirits Toddler's Group, which has been in existence for 14 years, regularly attracts 40 -45 families, Mainly young mothers, many have relocated to the area, leaving family and friends behind. We have a Who Let the Dad's Out too! Friendships are being formed among the group and with the Church.





## 7. Grantham and Vale of Belvoir

(continued)



We regularly update the Sales Offices of three large housing developments around the town with Welcome Leaflets

### East Bridgford

With our friends at St Peter's Parish Church, we shared in welcoming 100 children from the local primary school to an "Experience Advent" day. This was followed up on the Sunday, when both congregations came together for a café style worship and did the "Experience Advent" too! Harrowby Lane

We recently welcomed 80 people, mostly connected to our children and families outreach work, to watch Journey of the Magi, performed by the amazing Springs Dance Company.



## 7. Grantham and Vale of Belvoir

(continued)

**Experience Advent Café Church** on Sunday 1st December 10am when we share some of the wonderful stories of Advent which our intrepid group of volunteers helped to share with the children of St Peter's Academy on Wednesday.

Thank you to the many volunteers that have made Experience Advent possible from those who provided resources to those who served refreshments and especially to our storytellers who worked so hard with the children on Wednesday.





## 7. Grantham and Vale of Belvoir

(continued)

### Around the Circuit

Five preachers, with a combined ministry of 318 years between them, were presented with long service certificates.

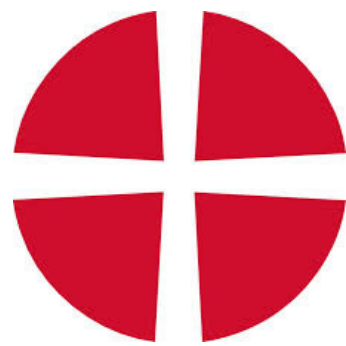
They were Clare Mountford (1946), Deacon Lois Bell (1954), Derek Clutterbuck (1964), John Eagles (1964), Denhys Lambley (1974). Enid Woodcock, organist at Skillington, was presented with a special certificate in recognition of over 75 years as an organist in the Methodist Church.





## 8. Sherwood Forest

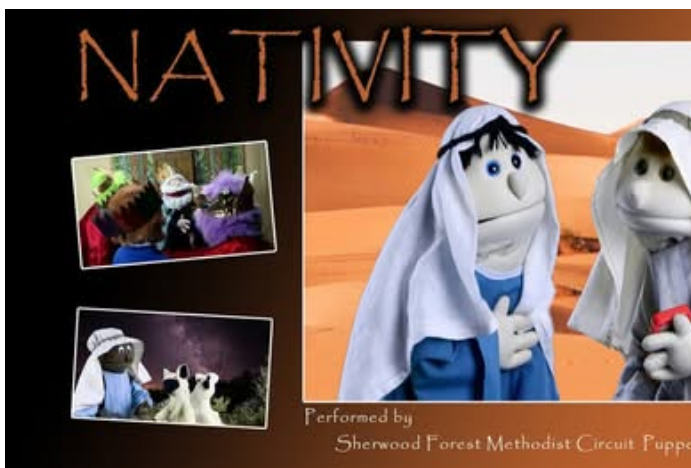
Superintendent - Stuart Ellis



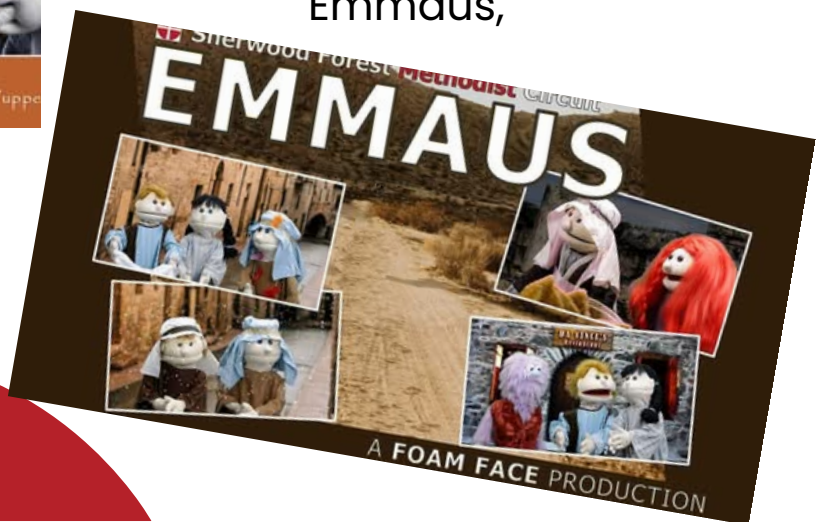
### Sanctuary

The Sanctuary hosted at many venues, including at Party in the Park, Yeoman Hill Park, Mansfield Woodhouse and Samworth Academy's Back to the 90s Festival.

**A space to 'be' and reflect together of how Jesus journeys with us throughout our lives.**



**Puppet Praise team** presented "Nativity". A no expense spared retelling of the two thousand year old story as told by Luke. Previous tiltes included Emmaus,



## 8. Sherwood Forest

(continued)

The Methodist Church  
Nottingham & Derby District



### The Peace Light from Bethlehem



#### A Special Reception Service

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December at 6pm  
Trinity Methodist Church,  
Mansfield Woodhouse

Led by Deacon Dave Keegan  
Preacher: Rev Andy Fyall, Chair of District

### Peace Light of Bethlehem

Hosted at Trinity, Mansfield Woodhouse. A tiny flame taken from the Grotto underneath the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem (The Grotto is The Stable) and distributed throughout the western world by Scouts & Girlguiding with a message for Peace. Kindle a flame for yourself or for your church, Scout HQ, hospital, care home, or wherever.

### Sherwood Church Quiet Garden

our Quiet Garden has won Best Communal Garden in the Nottingham City Council Best Garden Competition..  
Congratulations to the garden team and thanks to everyone who supports them.





## 9. Christianity Month.

Rev Chris Brigg

Littleover Methodist Church is the home of Christianity Month, the vision for which started in November 2022. Since grasping the vision of a month intentionally celebrating the way that the Christian Faith has changed the world for the better and in raising the profile in sharing good news, others have joined in marking Christianity Month. The Derby Circuit encourages observance, the Nottingham and Derby Methodist District is on board and ecumenically Derby City Vision also encourages churches to join.

The vision is more than local observance though and conversations have been happening with national Christian organisations in addition to churches and networks around the country.

It has been great to see positive responses from Christianity Month in May as Christians have joined together in neighbourhoods to help clean up areas, churches have put on a variety of events (eg Holiday Clubs, shows, comedy nights, art exhibitions, schools work, seeker friendly church services, coffee mornings and Launch events with Community and Civic dignitaries present).

A key principle is that this is not designed to replace ongoing mission during the year. It is an opportunity to focus our mission and to remind society that the Christian Faith does have so much that is positive to offer.

There is no training to do, no package to buy, no formal signing up of churches and keeping track of what they do or prescribing what they should do. There is the freedom to do whatever local churches or organisations want to do.



### Christianity Month is:

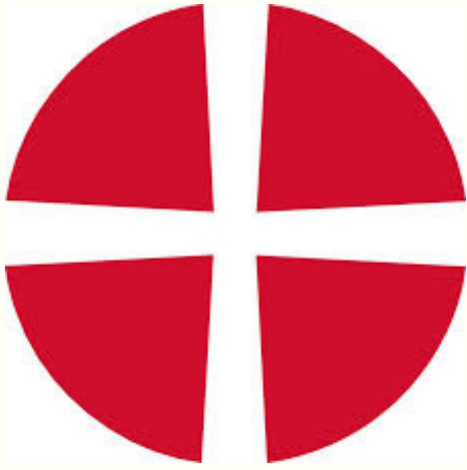
A Vision – something that is God given;

A Vehicle – that can be used by God to deliver good news about what Christ and the Christian faith has done, and does, to transform the world;

A Voice – we are Advocates and Ambassadors for Christ.

Members of the Derby Circuit with the Rt Hon Sir Stephen Timms MP, Christianity Month Launch Speaker for 2024 in the presence of His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Derbyshire and the Mayor of Derby together with the Chair of the Nottingham and Derby Methodist Circuit, Rev Andy Fyall.





Thankyou to all those who have contributed to this  
edition of the Good News Booklet

If you have a Good News Story we would like to hear from  
you



**Nottingham and Derby  
Methodist District**